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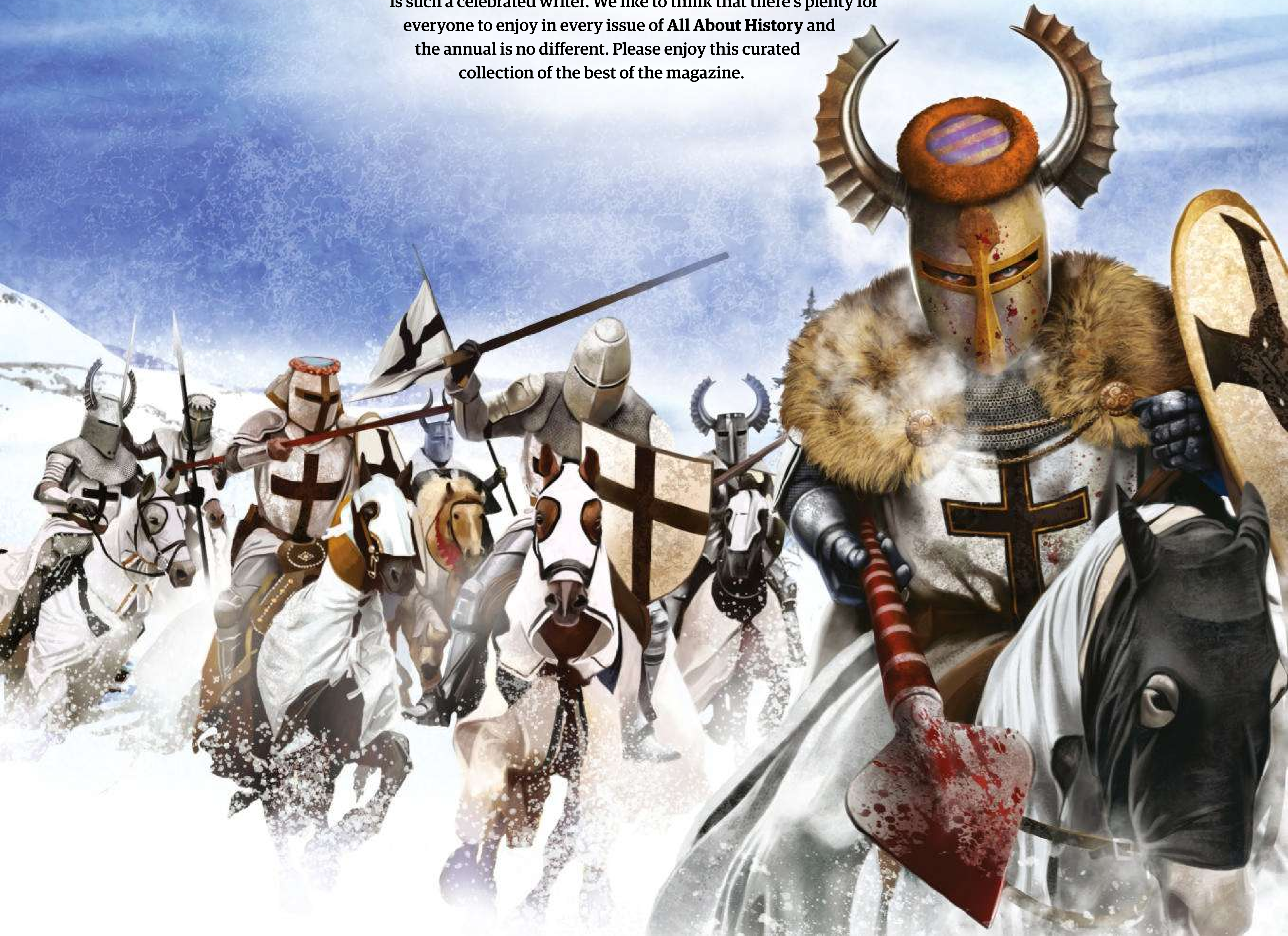
ALL ABOUT HISTORY ANNUAL

Royal intrigue, ancient mavericks, great romances, criminal masterminds and social pioneers; **All About History** is packed full of them all and it's always a pleasure to close out the year selecting some of the best examples to share in our latest annual. This year offers a particularly bumper crop of stories from short-lived monarchies to the secrets of Stonehenge and from vengeful samurai to mafia intrigue in Cuba. You can uncover the real story behind Tutankhamun, learn how a great Georgian queen helped to galvanise her people, why the Teutonic Knights were feared as much in Europe as in the Holy Land and why Mary Wollstonecraft is such a celebrated writer. We like to think that there's plenty for everyone to enjoy in every issue of **All About History** and the annual is no different. Please enjoy this curated collection of the best of the magazine.



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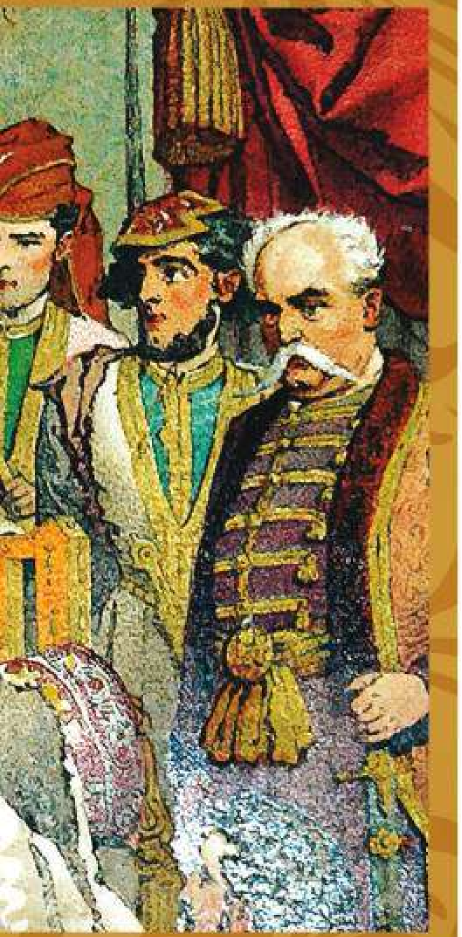

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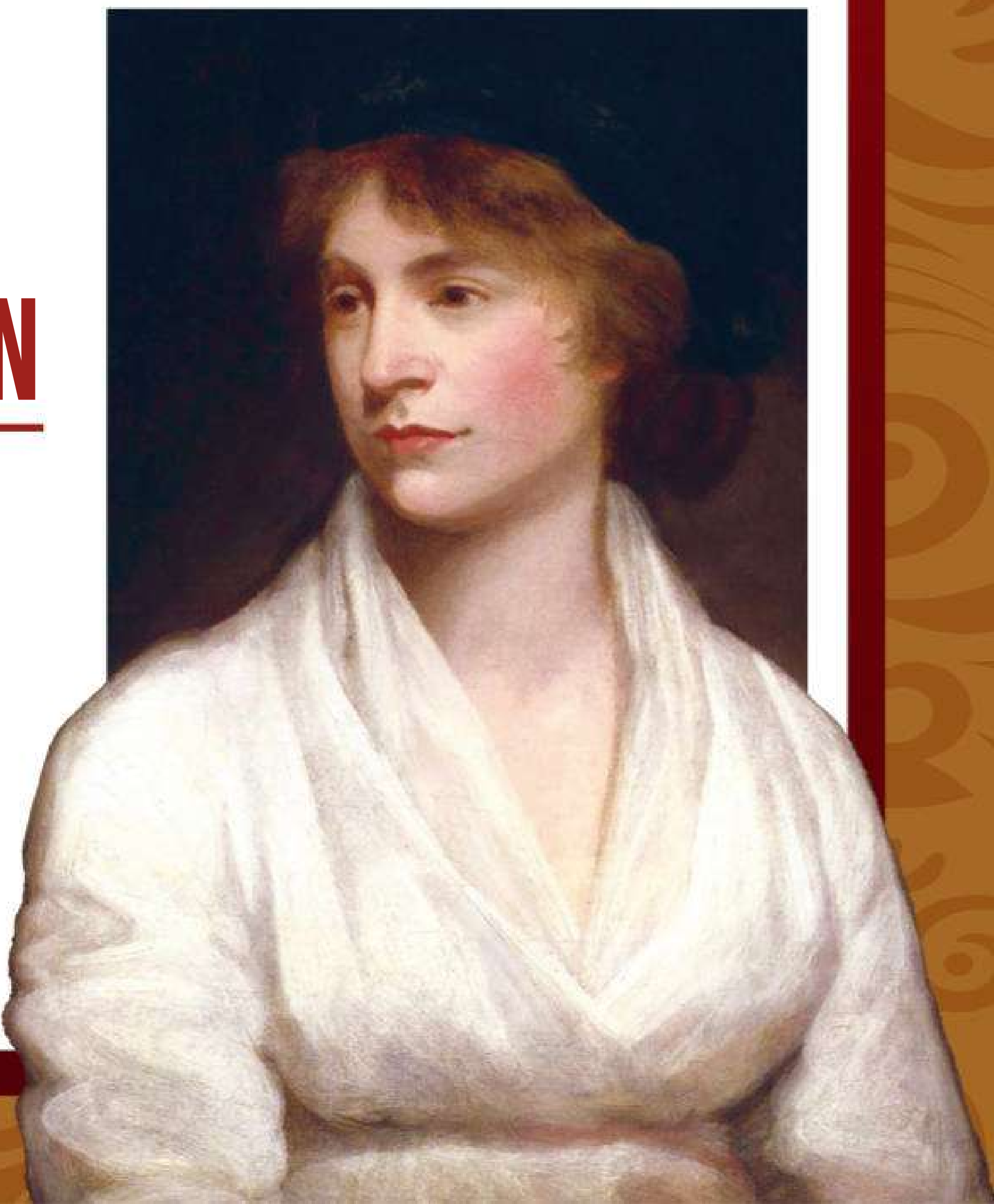
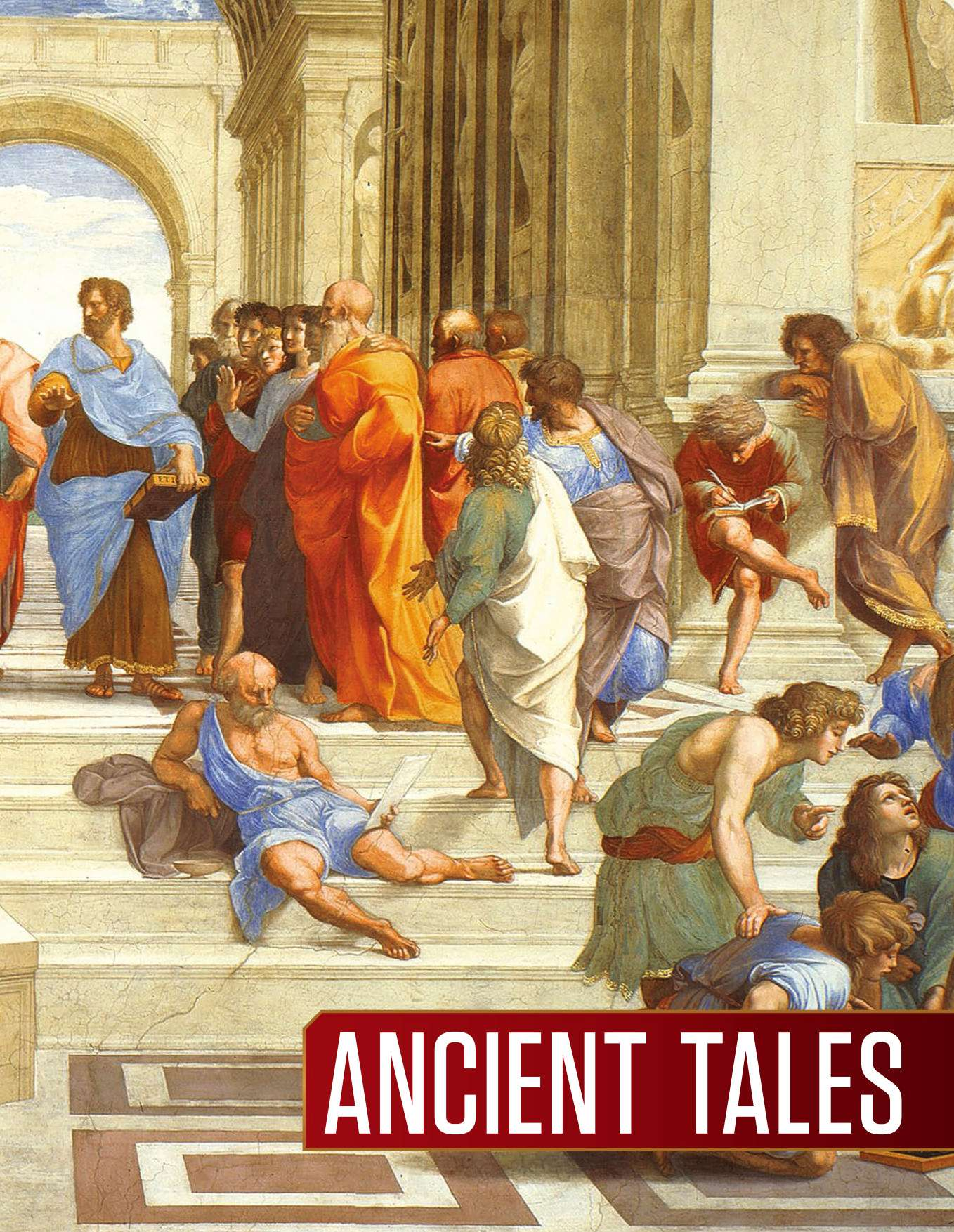
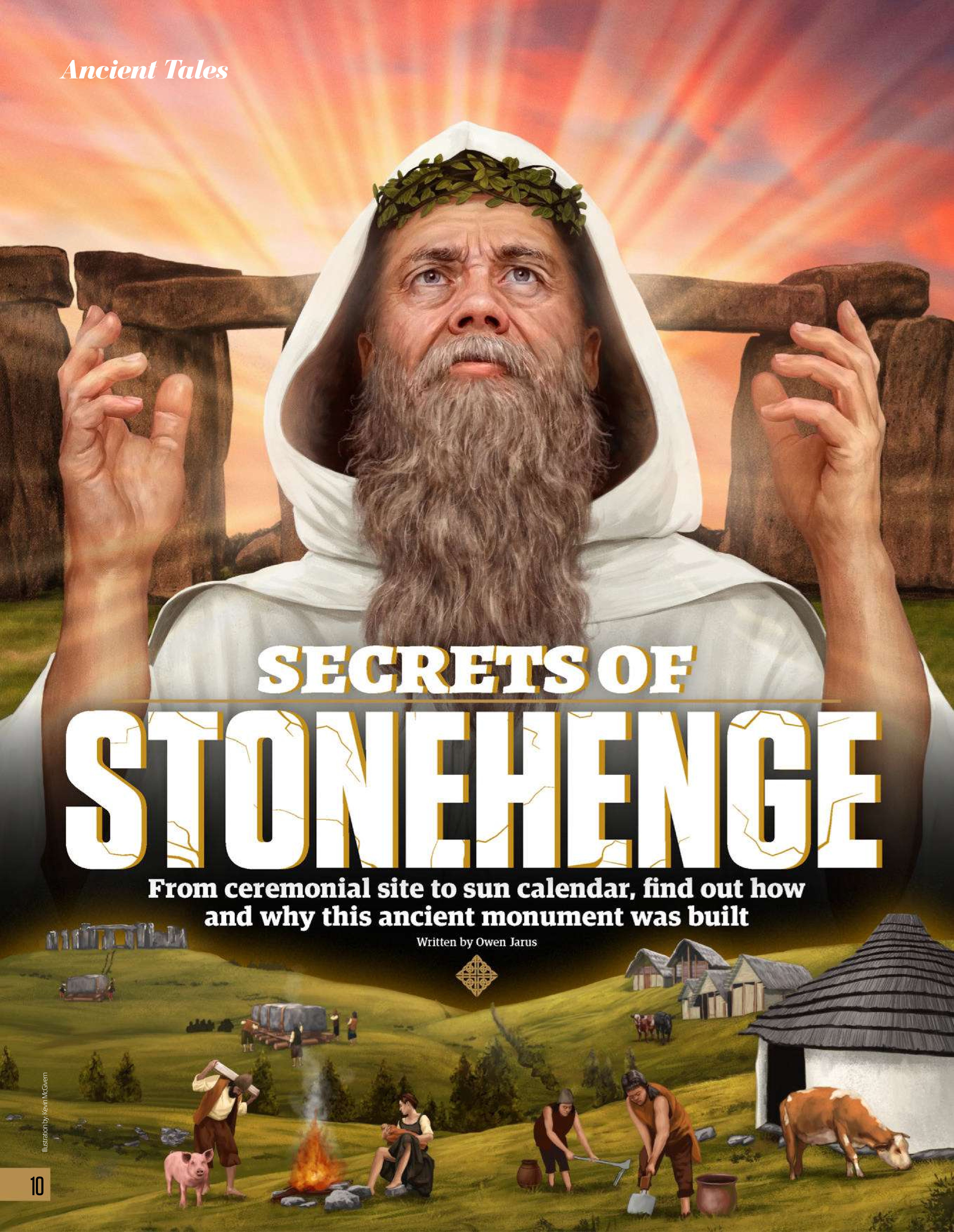




ANCIENT TALES

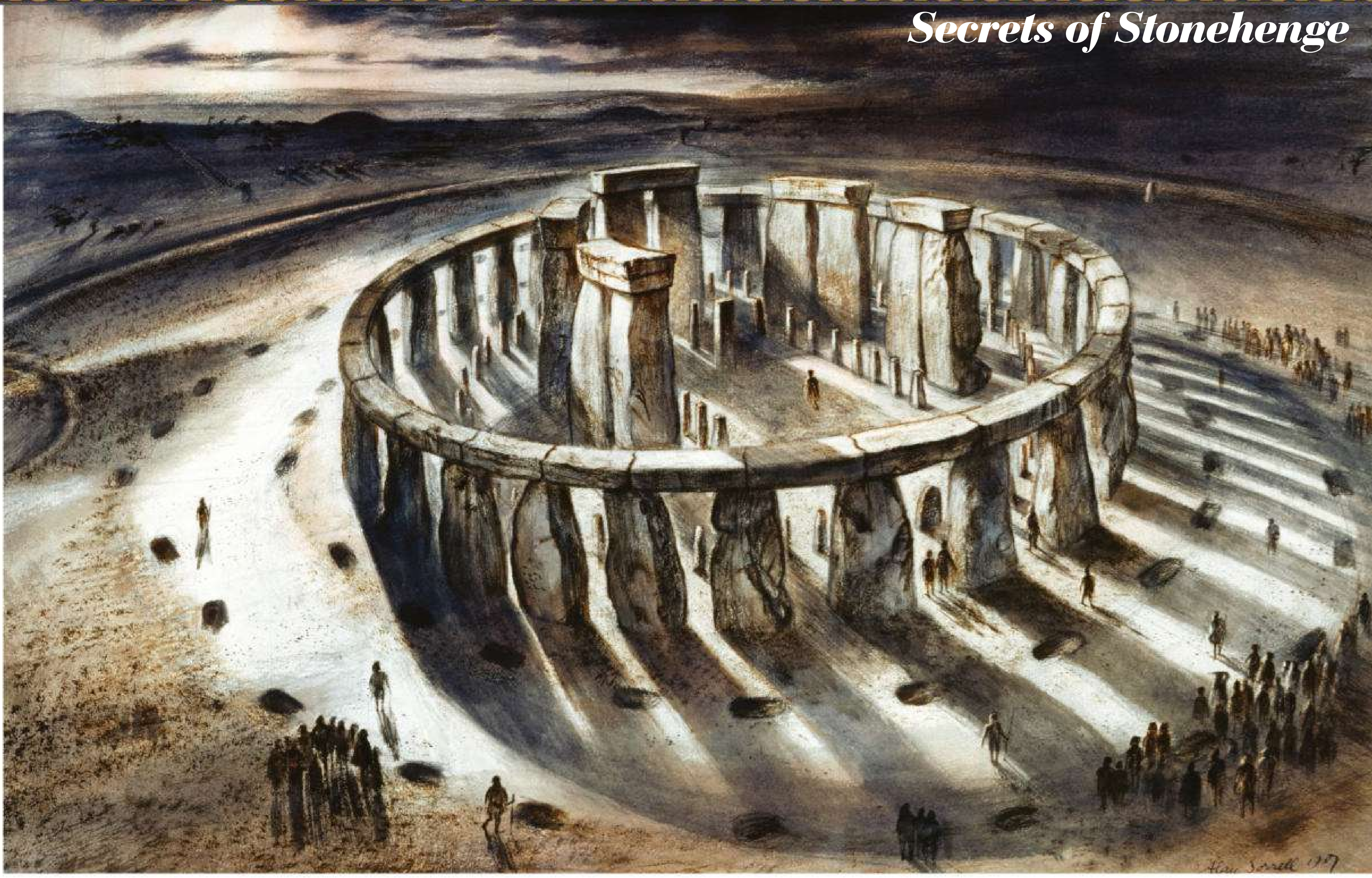


SECRETS OF STONEHENGE

From ceremonial site to sun calendar, find out how and why this ancient monument was built

Written by Owen Jarus

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

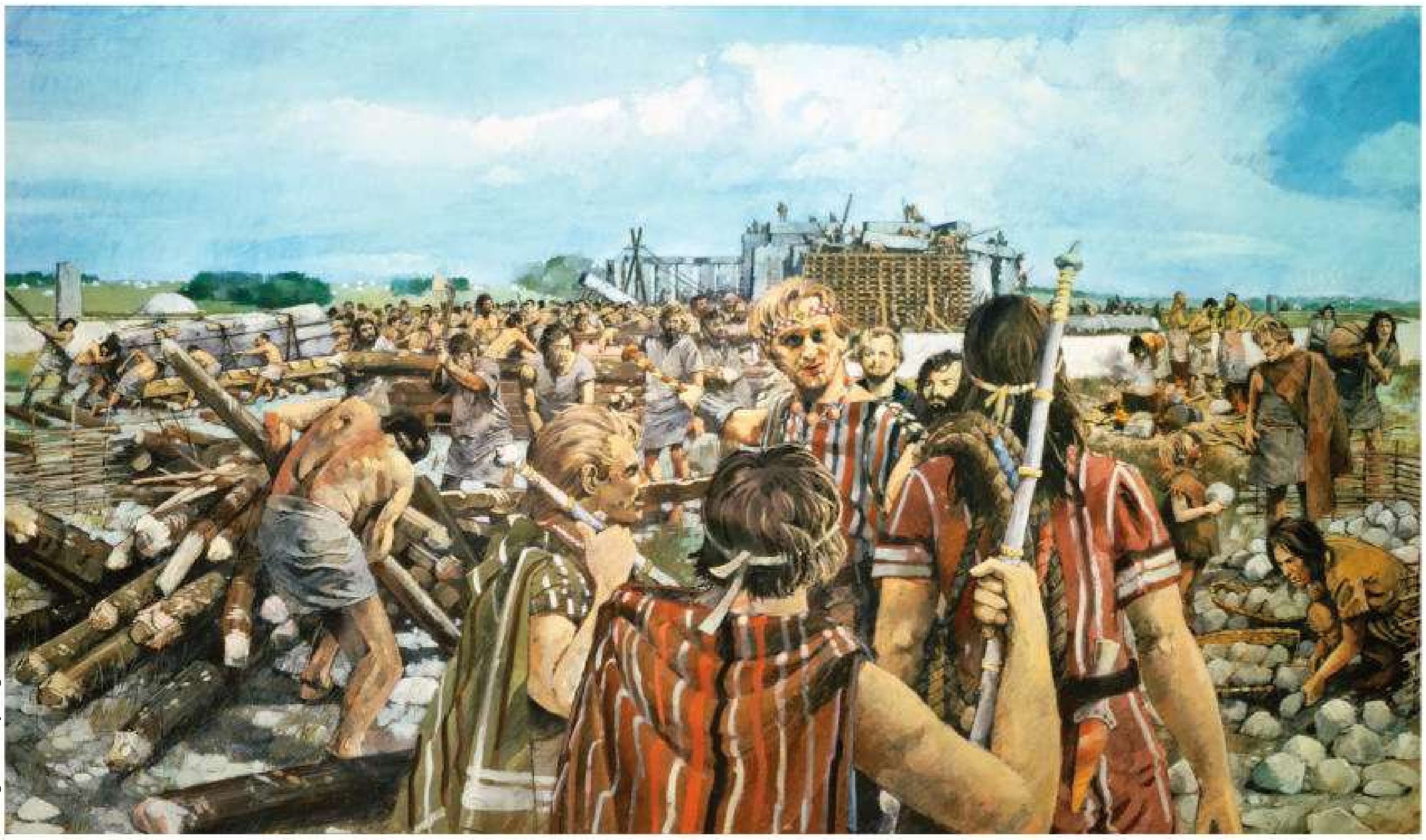


Stonehenge is a massive stone monument on a chalky plain north of the modern-day city of Salisbury, England. Research shows that the site continuously evolved over about 10,000 years and new discoveries continue to be made, revealing a complex landscape that scholars are still trying to understand.

Many other ancient megalithic structures have been discovered all around the world. While many of them are thought to be older, some are bigger and a few, arguably, are more historically important, Stonehenge remains by far the most famous – a household name that attracts curious visitors from all over the planet.

ABOVE A dramatic illustration of Stonehenge showing how it may have looked shortly after its construction

BELOW We've been able to discern a lot about the methods for the construction of Stonehenge



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Technologies such as ground-penetrating radar and electromagnetic induction surveys are revealing the remains of structures located beneath the surface, allowing for new discoveries to be made about the landscape that Stonehenge is located in. Additionally, advances in the analysis of plant, animal and human remains are allowing scholars to learn more about the people who built and used Stonehenge. However, despite all these advances it's still not clear what Stonehenge was used for.

BUILDING STONEHENGE

The structure that we call Stonehenge was built between roughly 5,000 to 4,000 years ago. It was constructed at a time before writing was used in the British Isles, meaning that modern-day scholars have to rely heavily on archaeological remains to understand the monument.

Around 3500 BCE a rectangular enclosure about 3km (1.9 miles) long was built to the north of where Stonehenge would be erected. It's called a 'cursus' because the person who discovered it in the 18th century, William Stukeley, thought that it was a Roman chariot racing track and called it a cursus (a Roman name for circus). Today we know that this is not true and, while the purpose of the cursus is not clear, it was built millennia before the Romans arrived in Britain.

Around 3000 BCE a circular ditch was dug around what would be Stonehenge along with a series of 56 holes – sometimes called ‘Aubrey holes’ after their 18th century discoverer John Aubrey. These holes may have held timber posts or bluestones, but this is uncertain. It’s possible that the heel stone, which is located outside the entrance to Stonehenge, was placed around this time but this is also uncertain.

Around 2500 BCE Stonehenge changed: a series of sarsen stones was erected in the shape of a horseshoe, with every pair of these huge stones having a stone lintel connecting them. A ring of sarsens surrounded the horseshoe, their tops connecting to each other, giving the appearance of a giant interconnected stone circle surrounding the horseshoe. The ‘altar stone’, as it is now called, was placed in the middle of the horseshoe. This stone is a large slab of greenish old red sandstone that was brought from Wales. The altar stone’s purpose is another mystery.

The sarsens are up to nine metres (30ft) tall and weigh on average 22.6 metric tons. It is widely believed that they were brought from Marlborough Downs, a distance of 32km (20 miles) to the north.

“It would have been very easy for builders to find stones like these. The Marlborough Downs... has vast numbers of stones, even today,” says David Nash, a physical geography professor at the University of Brighton who has studied the sarsen stones extensively. Two circles of bluestones were placed between the circle of sarsens and the sarsens in the shape of a horseshoe. Also, four ‘station stones’, as they are now called, were erected outside of Stonehenge.

Around 2300 BCE Stonehenge underwent another change as the bluestones were rearranged. One circle of bluestones was placed between the outer circle of sarsens and the sarsens in the shape of a horseshoe. Meanwhile another circle of bluestones was placed within the horseshoe. Around this time an ‘avenue’ was built connecting Stonehenge with the River Avon.

The bluestones (so named because they have a bluish tinge when wet or freshly broken), weigh up to 3.6 metric tons and come from several different sites in western Wales, having been transported as far as 225km (140 miles), according to Richard Bevins, a geologist at the National Museum of Wales. This was the last major construction phase that took place at Stonehenge. As time went on the monument fell into neglect and disuse, some of its stones fell over, while others were taken away.

There is an interesting connection between the nearby Cursus monument and Stonehenge. Archaeologists found that the large 3km-long Cursus monument had two pits, one on the east and one on the west. These pits, in turn, align with Stonehenge’s heel stone and the avenue.

“Suddenly, you’ve got a link between [the Cursus monument] and Stonehenge through two massive pits, which appear to be aligned on the sunrise and sunset

> “If it was one of the spiritual centres of your religion why wouldn’t you want to be buried there?”

A LESSER HENGE?

Gobekli Tepe in Turkey is a far older megalithic monument that is, arguably, more important than Stonehenge

While Stonehenge is the most famous megalithic monument in the world – a household name that most people know – it is certainly not the oldest. In fact, it can also be argued that it is not the most important megalithic site.

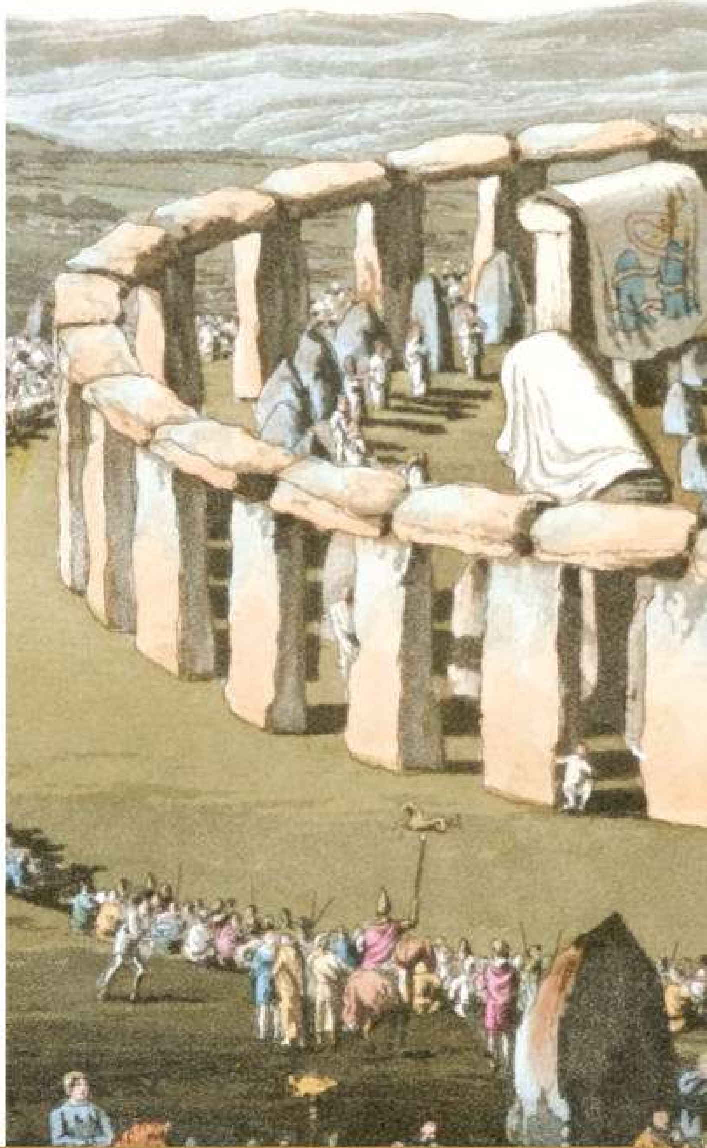
The site of Gobekli Tepe in southern Turkey was built about 11,000 years ago and has T-shaped pillars that have carvings of animals, people and abstract symbols. Study of artefacts found at the site indicate that people travelled long distances from across the region to visit the site.

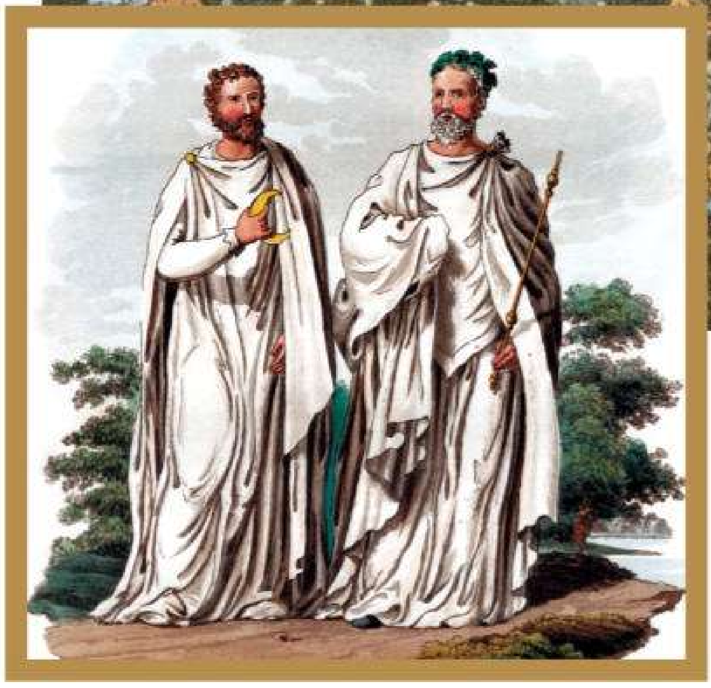
Sprawling over about eight hectares (20 acres), it was constructed using a geometric plan and is one of the earliest monuments ever constructed by humans. Some scholars regard it as being the world's oldest known temple.

It was built by hunter-gatherers at a time before humans were growing crops on any substantial scale. Prior to its discovery in 1994 many scholars believed that hunter-gatherers at this time would not have been able to build a structure like this.

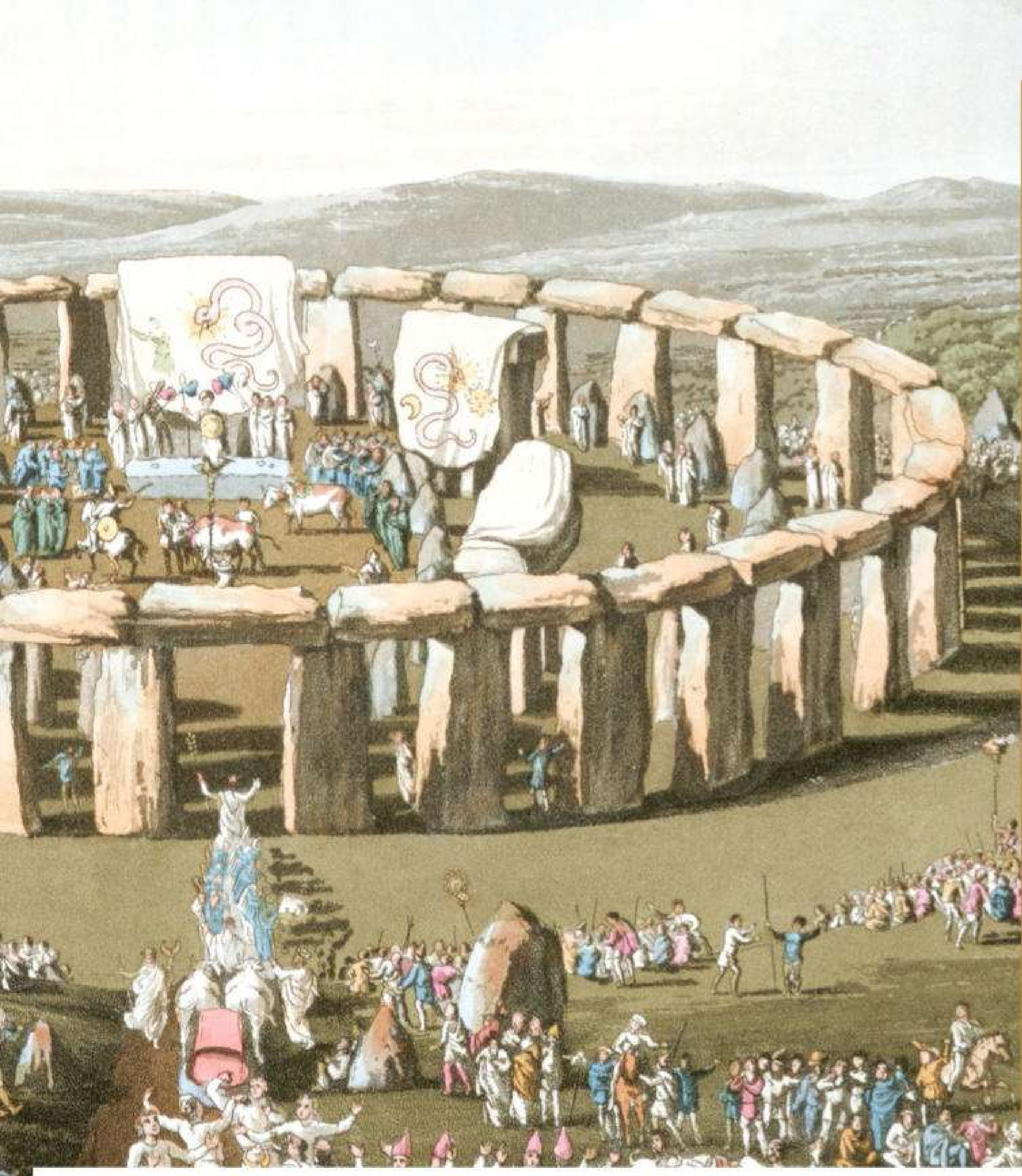
While Stonehenge is an amazing site it is much younger than Gobekli Tepe and was built at a time when agriculture was widely used.

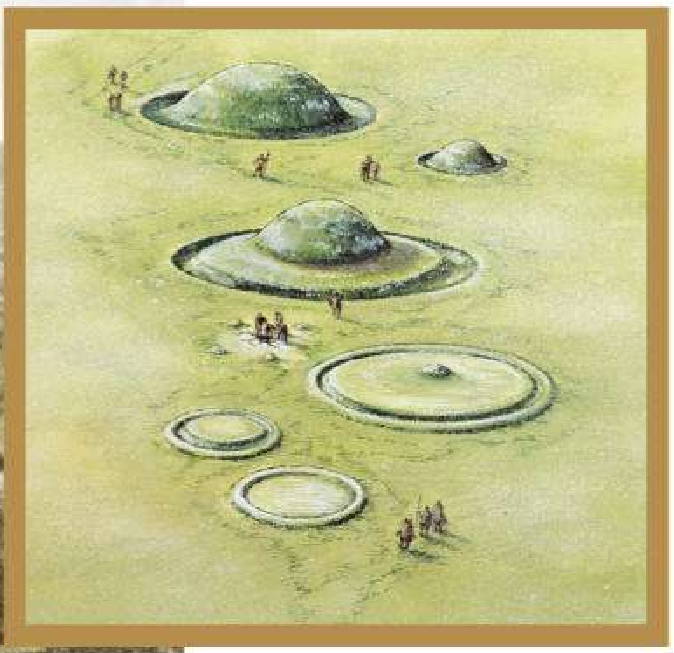
A depiction of what Stonehenge might have looked like with all of its stones standing





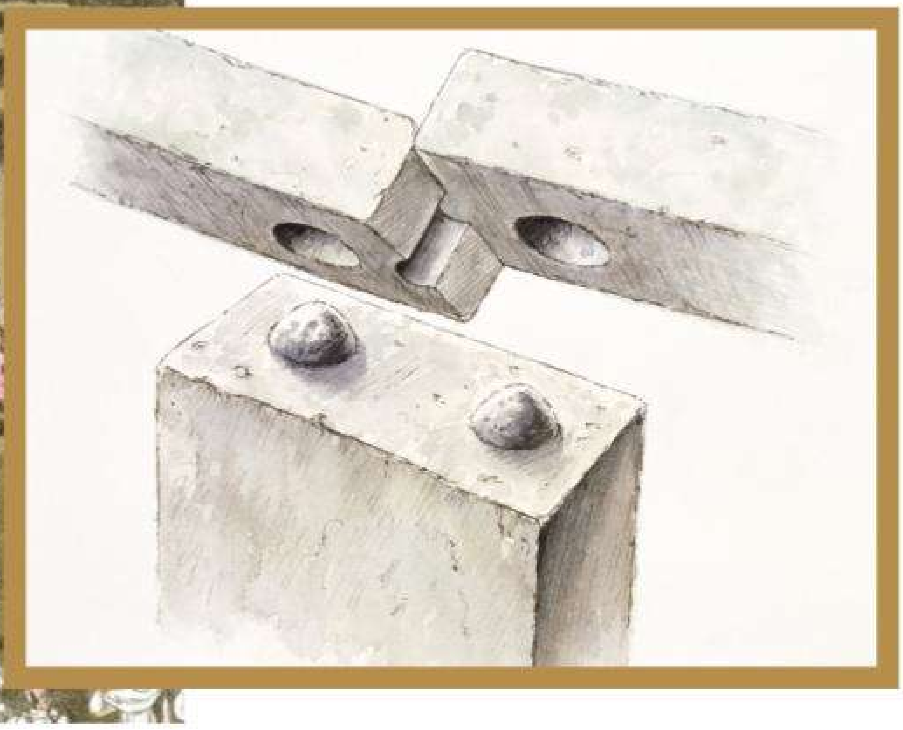
ABOVE While druids have been heavily associated with Stonehenge for centuries, it’s not believed they had a hand in its construction

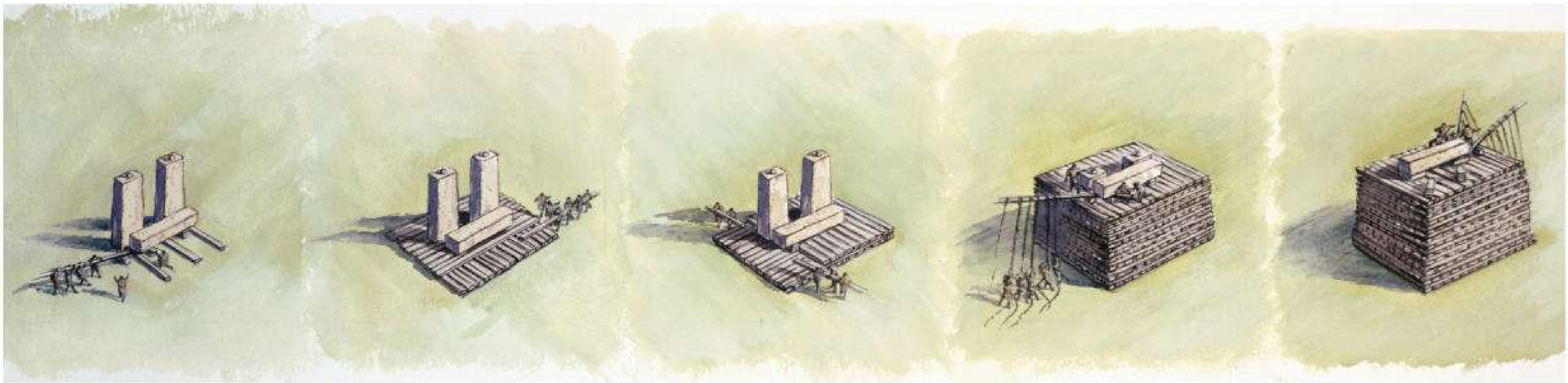




LEFT Examples of the kind of burial mounds that would have been around Stonehenge

BELOW This is how the sarsen circle joints worked to keep the henge together, locking the upright stones to the lintels above





ABOVE An example of how the heavy lintel stones could have been raised

on the mid-summer solstice," explains University of Bradford archaeologist Vincent Gaffney, who is leading a project to map Stonehenge and its surrounding environs.

There are several other solstice alignments at the ancient monument. For instance, during the summer solstice the sun rises behind the heel stone and its first rays shine into the heart of Stonehenge. When the largest trilithon in the monument was standing (it has now collapsed) the sun would have set between the narrow gap of these uprights during the winter solstice.

The Workers

Some of the people who built Stonehenge may have lived near the monument at a settlement excavated at Durrington Walls. A circle of wooden posts was recently found at this site, and there is also evidence of feasting at Durrington Walls but not at Stonehenge itself, according to Richard Madgwick, a senior lecturer in archaeological science at Cardiff University.

Madgwick's research on pig bones at Durrington Walls has revealed that people brought pigs from all over Britain to hold feasts. Few animal bones have been found at Stonehenge itself, suggesting that people preferred to feast a bit away from the site.

"Feasting would have been an important part of what happened in the Stonehenge landscape and probably an important part of mobilising people for its construction," explains Madgwick.

It's unknown how people moved the bluestones from western Wales. An experiment conducted in 2016 by researchers at University College London show that it is possible for a one-ton stone to be moved by a dozen people on a wooden trackway, but whether this technique was actually ▶

All images: © Getty Images

used is uncertain. A 2019 study in the archeology journal *Antiquity* suggested that pig lard could have been used to grease any trackway used, making it easier to move the stones. The weather itself may also have helped the builders move the blocks. “The wet winter weather would also have helped keep them [the stones] slippy,” explains Barney Harris, a researcher who has written about the labour it would have taken to build Stonehenge in his doctoral thesis.

Another possibility is that glaciers during the last ice age moved some of the bluestones closer to Stonehenge, meaning that the builders didn't have to bring them all the way from Wales. However, this idea has not found much support among archaeologists.

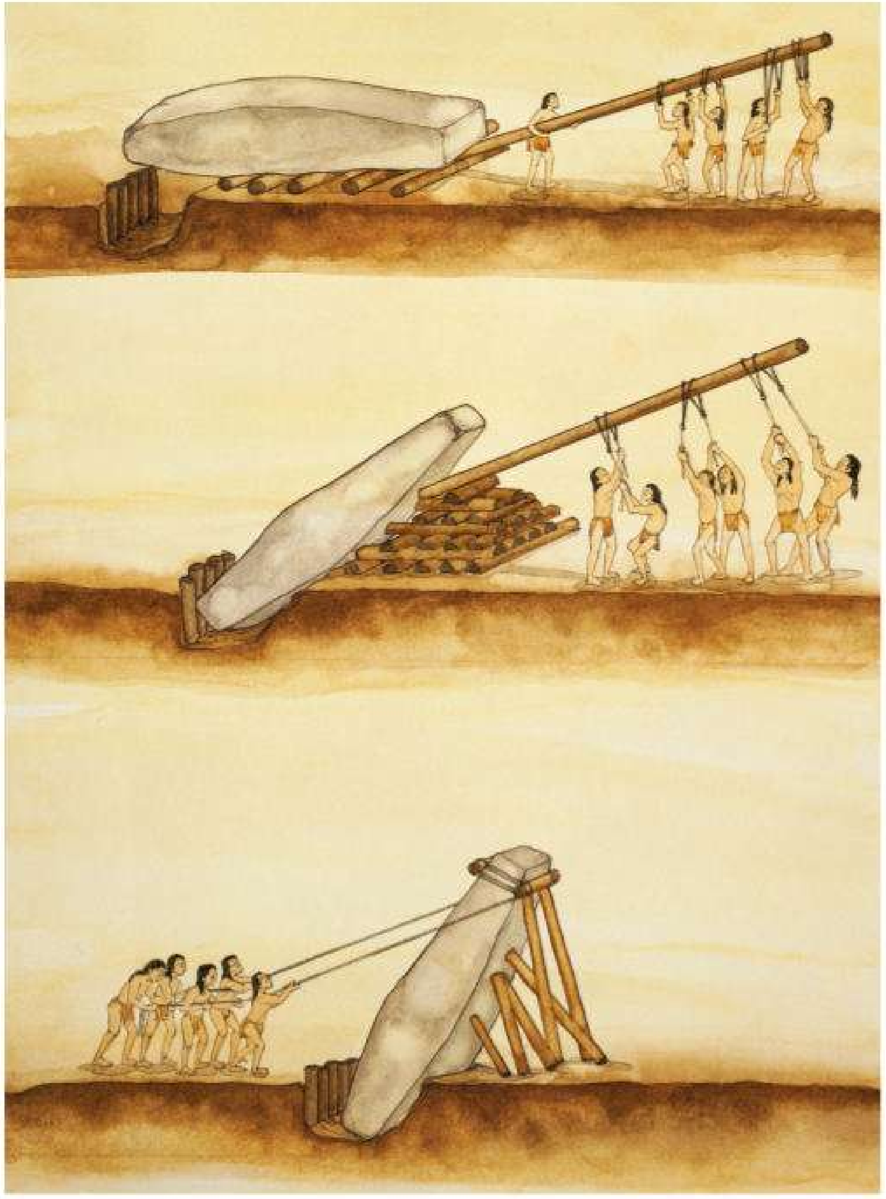
Water transport by raft is another idea that has been proposed but researchers now question whether this method was viable. Bevins' team found that 55 percent of the bluestones come from a place called Carn Goedog in western Wales that is far enough away from waterways that it would have made transport by raft difficult.

Harris estimates that it would have taken 810,000 hours of labour to move the bluestones from western Wales, and he says to move the sarsen stones from Marlborough Downs and erect them at Stonehenge would have taken about 5.3 million hours of labour.

“The building crew was probably a mixed bunch, encompassing a diverse array of individuals including women and children,” says Harris. “They likely lived, feasted and laboured together on the construction of Stonehenge on a seasonal basis.” He believes that a smaller group of people likely designed Stonehenge and supervised its construction.

Research conducted by members of the Stonehenge Riverside Project found that the workers who built Stonehenge consumed a diet that included beef, pork, nuts, fruit and dairy to give them the strength for their extremely arduous work. Meanwhile Susan Greaney, an archaeologist and senior properties historian at English Heritage, says that nuts and fruit may even have been cooked with meat fats to make “a great ‘energy bar’, full of calories.”

ABOVE
A recreation of the kinds of tools and utensils available to neolithic Britons



LEFT
Raising the upright stones would have been a challenge with neolithic technology, but not impossible

> “JUST THE WORK ITSELF, REQUIRING EVERYONE LITERALLY TO PULL TOGETHER, WOULD HAVE BEEN AN ACT OF UNIFICATION”

SACRED LANDSCAPE

From what scientists can tell, Salisbury Plain was considered to be a sacred area long before Stonehenge itself was constructed on it. As early as 10,500 years ago, three large pine posts, which were totem poles of sorts, were erected at the site.

One famous landscape feature near Stonehenge is called Woodhenge. This site had six circles of wooden standing posts, surrounded by a bank and ditch. Built around 2500 BCE, the wooden posts have long since decayed away, and concrete markers now show the locations where the posts once stood. The site was discovered in 1925 when aerial photographs showed rings of dark spots in a wheat field. Excavations at Woodhenge revealed the remains of pottery, stone tools, animal bones and human bones, with at least two burials at the site. The exact purpose of Woodhenge, like Stonehenge, remains uncertain.

New discoveries are being made, for instance in 2014 researchers using ground-penetrating radar reported finding at least 17 shrines near Stonehenge. Earlier this year scientists identified 415 potential large pits that were bigger than 2.4 metres (7.9ft) in diameter, and about 3,000 smaller pits that were less than 2.4 metres across. Some of these pits were used for hunting while others may have had ceremonial importance. The pits were found using electromagnetic induction field survey, a method that analyses the electrical conductivity of the soil to find archaeological remains. More fieldwork needs to be done to see how many of these potential pits are actually pits.

Dozens of burial mounds have been discovered near Stonehenge indicating that hundreds, if not thousands, of

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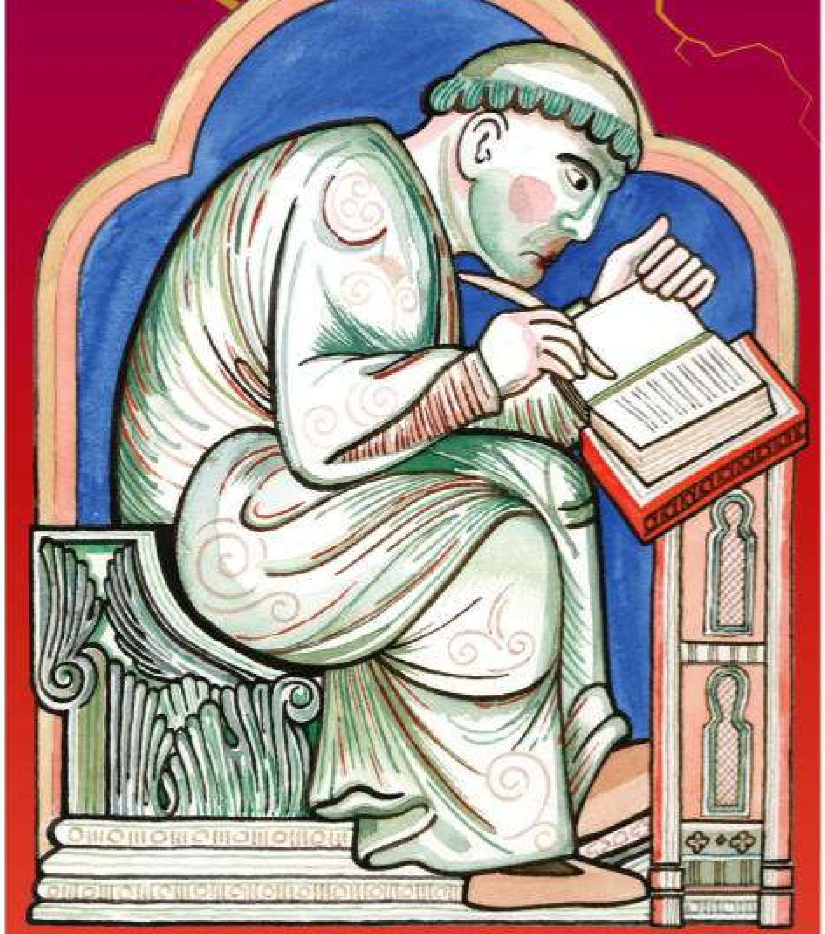


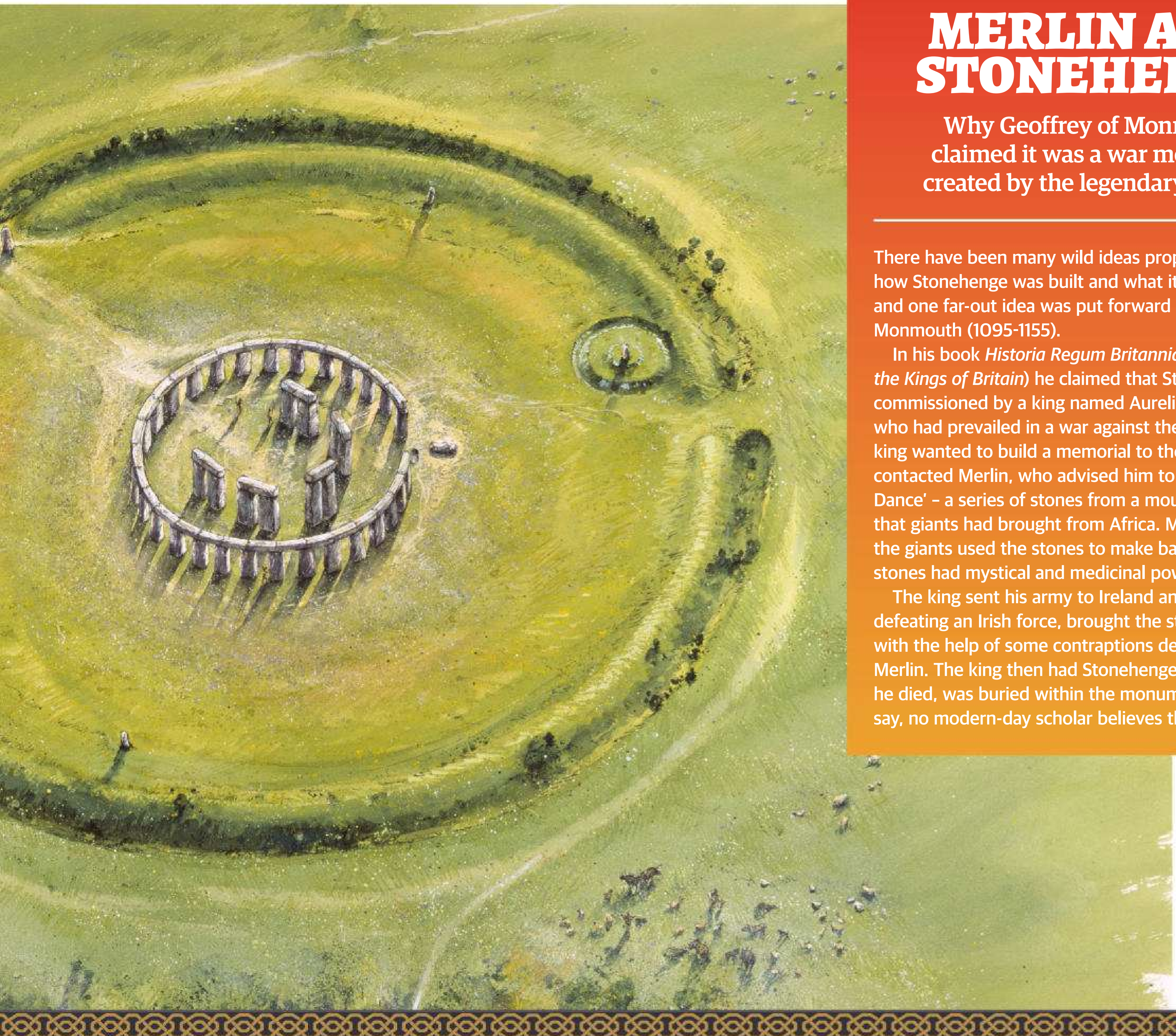
MERLIN AND STONEHENGE

Why Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed it was a war memorial created by the legendary wizard

There have been many wild ideas proposed about how Stonehenge was built and what it was built for, and one far-out idea was put forward by Geoffrey of Monmouth (1095-1155).

In his book *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*) he claimed that Stonehenge was commissioned by a king named Aurelius Ambrosius, who had prevailed in a war against the Saxons. The king wanted to build a memorial to the fallen and contacted Merlin, who advised him to use the 'Giant's Dance' – a series of stones from a mountain in Ireland that giants had brought from Africa. Merlin claimed the giants used the stones to make baths and that the stones had mystical and medicinal powers.

The king sent his army to Ireland and, after defeating an Irish force, brought the stones to Britain with the help of some contraptions designed by Merlin. The king then had Stonehenge built and, after he died, was buried within the monument. Needless to say, no modern-day scholar believes this story.



LEFT An aerial view of what Stonehenge might have looked like in its early years

All images: © Getty Images

ABOVE A group is photographed having a picnic at Stonehenge, 1875

ABOVE-RIGHT Two men pose at Stonehenge in 1890

people were buried there in ancient times. In fact, cremated remains have been found within Stonehenge itself according to Matt Leivers, an archaeologist with Wessex Archaeology, an organisation that provides archaeological and heritage services. The importance that Stonehenge had helps explain why people were buried within or near the monument.

Some human remains may have been brought a long distance to be buried near Stonehenge. Leivers says: "We know from isotope evidence, for instance, that some of the people buried at Stonehenge spent parts of their lives on the European mainland."

Leivers, who has excavated some of the burials near Stonehenge, adds: "It seems beyond doubt that Stonehenge - an extraordinary temple to the rising and setting sun, an expression of peoples' oneness and enmeshment with life's cycles, the cog that turned the world - had a fame and renown that spread far beyond the confines of south-west England. If it was one of the spiritual centres of your religion why wouldn't you want to be buried there?"

HUNTING

Archaeologists have also found evidence that widespread prehistoric hunting took place near the site of Stonehenge. For example, they have recently excavated a 10,000-year-old hunting pit that, according to Philippe De Smedt, an associate professor of the environment at Ghent University in Belgium, was "probably dug as a hunting trap for large game such as aurochs [a now-extinct cattle species], red deer and wild boar."

This landscape was certainly an excellent place for hunting. Sam Hudson, a postgraduate research student at the University of Southampton's school of geography and environmental science, agrees that hunters in the area "particularly targeted aurochs, though other species such as red deer, elk, wild boar and fish were eaten too." By the time Stonehenge was built, people in the area would have been consuming a large number of domesticated animals.

"I believe that by the time of the construction of Stonehenge it is likely that all populations would've been eating domestic pigs and cattle, as well as small amounts of cereal crops and possibly wild plants too," Hudson explains.

> “The building crew was probably a mixed bunch, encompassing a diverse array of individuals including women and children”

Why was Stonehenge constructed?

Many theories have been put forward as to why Stonehenge was constructed. “It's crucial to remember that Stonehenge was built and used over a period of more than a millennium, and over that time its meaning and purpose will have changed a lot, as will peoples' reasons for thinking it important,” says Leivers, noting that Stonehenge does face the rising sun on midsummer morning, suggesting that this was of some importance.

Another possibility is that Stonehenge may have been used as a solar calendar. In an article published in the journal *Antiquity* in 2022 Timothy Darvill, an archaeology professor at Bournemouth University, used numerology (the study of the meaning of numbers) to propose how this would work. Stonehenge had 30 large sarsen stones, linked together at the top with 30 stone lintels forming a circle, wrote Darvill, noting that if you multiplied 30 by 12 it would give you 360 days.

Inside this sarsen circle were 10 stones, forming a horseshoe shape, that were spaced apart in groups of two, resulting in five pairs of stones that may have represented five additional days – giving 365 days, Darvill wrote. Finally, there are four ‘station stones,’ as archaeologists call them, that are located outside the sarsen circle, which could signify the need to add a day once every four years given a solar year of 365.25 days.

Another idea is that acoustics - creating a place where sound could be amplified - played a role in the decision to build Stonehenge. A study published in 2020 in the *Journal of Archaeological Science* found that sound within the outer circle of Stonehenge was amplified by the ring of sarsens between ten percent and 20 percent compared

▶

ABOVE-LEFT Druids celebrating midsummer in 1948, surrounded by onlookers

ABOVE Druids celebrate the Summer Solstice at Stonehenge, 21 June 1978

All images: © Getty Images

HAMMERING AWAY

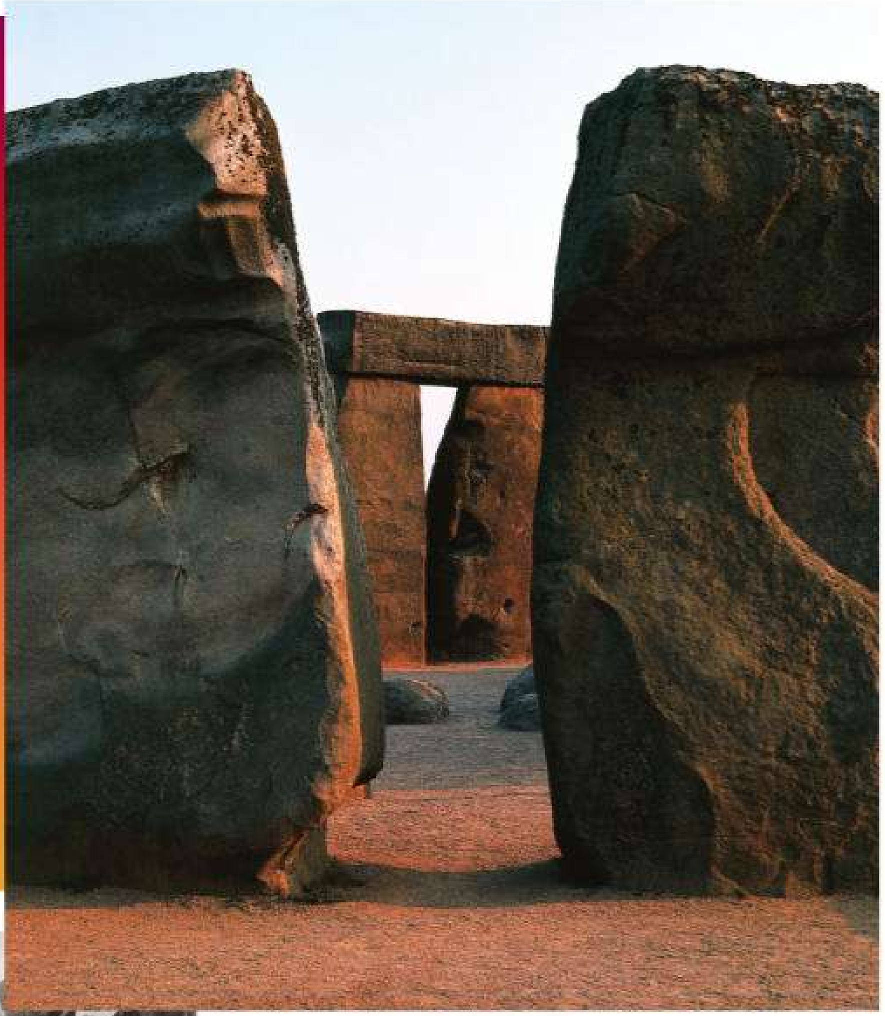
The tools used to construct Stonehenge

The ancient builders of Stonehenge used other stones to hammer the sarsens and bluestones into shape. English Heritage, the charity that oversees Stonehenge, revealed that large amounts of hammered-off sarsen and bluestone material was found along with broken hammerstones in a field north of Stonehenge.

The hammerstones vary in size, with the larger hammerstones being used to break off large pieces and the smaller hammerstones being used to finish and smooth their surfaces.

Some stones were more finely finished then others, with the stones in the centre of Stonehenge typically having a finer finish.

To connect the stones together, circular protrusions were carved into the top of the upright stones while holes were carved into the bottom of the lintels. Additionally, a mortise and tenon-like design was used at the end of the lintels: a protrusion was carved into the end of some lintels and they would fit into small openings carved at the end of other lintels.



ABOVE Some restoration attempts have not been very successful, leading to continued maintenance

TO FACE C
TO FACE C

LEFT The site has seen several conservation projects over the decades, such as this one from 1958

ABOVE Revellers flocked to Stonehenge for the Winter Solstice in December 2021 when the site was reopened

ABOVE-INSET Many present-day groups regard Stonehenge as a monument of religious importance

> **“There is an ongoing legal battle over a plan to build a 3.2km tunnel near Stonehenge”**

with sound in the open. The research also revealed that speech or music made within Stonehenge was harder to hear if you were outside the sarsen circle.

Another theory about Stonehenge, released in 2012 by members of the Stonehenge Riverside Project, is that Stonehenge marks the “unification of Britain,” a time when people across the island worked together and used a similar style of houses, pottery and other items. It would explain why they were able to bring bluestones all the way from west Wales and how the labour and resources for the construction were marshalled.

“Stonehenge itself was a massive undertaking, requiring the labour of thousands to move stones from as far away as west Wales, shaping them and erecting them. Just the work itself, requiring everyone literally to pull together, would have been an act of unification,” says professor Mike Parker Pearson of the University of Sheffield.

Were the Druids involved?

One question that is sometimes asked is whether the druids were involved in the building of Stonehenge or played a role in any activities that occurred there. Ancient records indicate that the druids were active in Britain and Gaul (modern day France). The earliest written record we have mentioning the druids dates back about 2,400 years, explains Barry Cunliffe, an emeritus professor of European archaeology, in his book *Druids: A Very Short Introduction*. Stonehenge was constructed between roughly 5,000 to 4,000 years ago, leaving a significant gap of time between Stonehenge and the earliest written record of the druids. Cunliffe notes in his book that druidism surely goes back earlier than 2,400 years, but just how far back is unknown.

However, from what is known about the druids, scholars tend to be sceptical of a link between the druids and Stonehenge. “Classical authors referred to ancient druids worshipping only in wooded groves - there is no mention of any link between druids and stone [monuments] let alone Stonehenge,” wrote Pearson in an article published in 2013 in the journal *Archaeology International*.

Stonehenge today

Stonehenge is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and, while visitors can get close to the site, they cannot usually touch the stones or enter the circle itself. The Stonehenge Visitor Centre features artefacts dating to the time of Stonehenge and has a number of displays detailing the site’s history. The number of visitors varies but it tends to attract more than one million per year.

Today ‘neo-pagan’ groups that embrace ancient druidic and non-Christian beliefs regard Stonehenge as a monument of some religious importance and often visit the site around the time of the solstices to mark the occasion. At times officials allow these groups, and others who wish to observe the solstice, inside the circle.

Conservation of Stonehenge is an ongoing concern. In the 1960s conservators used cement mortar to fill in cracks in the stones, a problem as cement can lead to damage to the stones from trapped moisture. In 2021 conservators removed the cement mortar and replaced it with lime mortar that does not trap moisture.

While many lichens now grow on the stones, conservators want to preserve rather than destroy them. The lichens are “an important part of the ecosystem, and a vital part of the character of the stones themselves,” English Heritage said in a 2021 statement.

The expansion of nearby roads is a conservation concern. At the time of writing there is an ongoing legal battle over a plan to build a 3.2km road tunnel near Stonehenge as part of a highway expansion plan. Archaeologists and environmentalists say the tunnel may have a negative effect on Stonehenge, and the matter is currently before the courts. ○

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ZENOBIA
WARRIOR QUEEN

How the self-proclaimed heir to Cleopatra and Queen Dido of Carthage forged herself an empire amid Rome's troubles

Written by Murray Dahm

Born in around 240 CE to an aristocratic Palmyrene family, Zenobia (her name may have been Bat-Zabbai or Na'ilah in her own language) married Septimius Odenathus at the age of 17 or 18. He was an important local aristocrat, an experienced general and the military commander of Palmyra. Odenathus was already a widower and had a son, Septimius Hairan (or Haeranes) Herodianus, by his first marriage. Zenobia would also give Odenathus a son, Septimius Vaballathus, born between 258 and 260 CE; there may also have been more sons, Septimius Antiochus, Herennianus, Timolaus and possibly another Hairan. We are also told of two daughters. Although no known statue or likeness of Zenobia can be identified with confidence, her portrait survives on coins and she was renowned for her beauty, wit and education. Despite the fact she became an enemy of Rome, the sources, especially the historian Zosimus and the *Historia Augusta*, record a complex and nuanced picture of her life.

ROME IN CRISIS

The position Odenathus occupied seems to have been a new one and may reflect the precarious position of Rome in the 3rd century. Since around 235 CE the Roman Empire had experienced enormous upheavals as the stability of the 2nd century, when the empire reached its greatest extent, gave way to a series of political and military crises, both internal and external. The assassination of the emperor Severus Alexander in 235 CE led to more than 60 years of tremendous disruption that would only come to an end with the emperor Diocletian (r.284-305 CE). Emperors were assassinated with alarming regularity and usurpers arose just as regularly, making a claim on the imperial throne. The armies of the various provinces chose their own imperial candidates and, with the threat of military ▶

Four Zenobia Facts

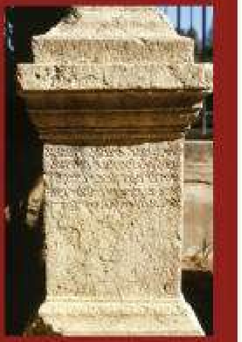
Vital things to know about the empress and her realm

Independence of Palmyra

The wealthy city state of Palmyra held a unique position in the Roman Empire. It functioned as an independent colony, free to collect its own taxes, but privy to the protection of the emperor. Palmyra grew rich off the taxes levied on caravans travelling the Silk Road to the west.

Lost in translation

Zenobia's full name in Greek was Septimia Zenobia, but was most likely a Latinisation of the Arabic al-Zabba, which was itself a translation of Zenobia's true Aramaic name, Bat-Zabbai, or 'daughter of Zabbai'. Her native language was Aramaic.

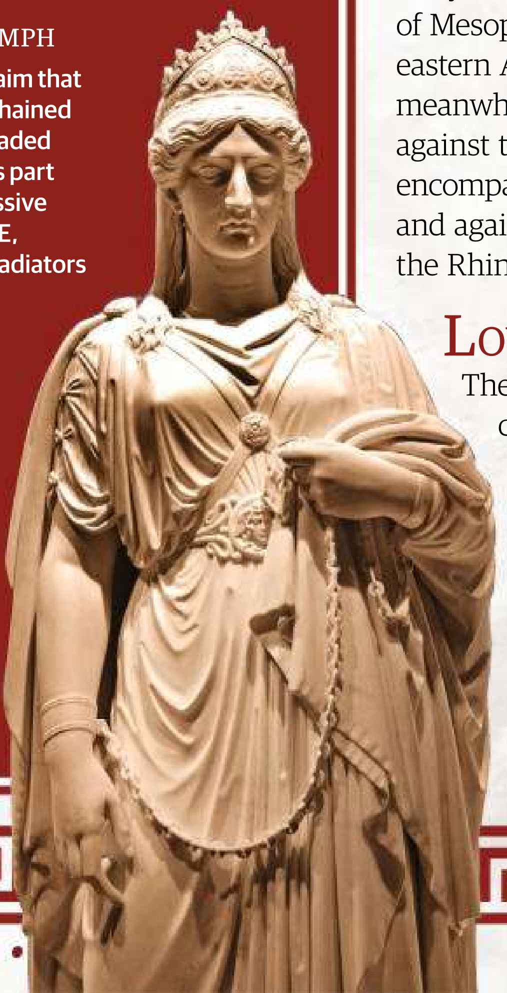


Spice security

As a critical stop on the Silk Road, Palmyra was responsible for protecting the silk and spice caravans along the stretch of road within its boundaries. The task fell to private armies of swift horsemen that earned a reputation for their prowess at repelling bandits.

Roman triumph

Some sources claim that a captured and chained Zenobia was paraded through Rome as part of Aurelian's massive triumph in 274 CE, featuring 800 gladiators and conquered captives from every barbarian tribe. Some say she rode in a golden chariot he had built for her entrance into Rome.



force (or actual violence in some cases), made them emperor, one after another. Several provinces broke away to form empires of their own in Gaul and Britain, Egypt, and in Palmyra. When Zenobia married Odenathus in 258 CE, however, such a break was not inevitable. Odenathus, it seems, was given the military command of Palmyra to try and maintain or restore Roman control of the region.

Palmyra was an important and wealthy merchant city in the Roman province of Syria-Phoenice. Close to the eastern border (the Euphrates River) with Sassanid Persia, Palmyra also had a strong military garrison to act as both protection and deterrent from raiding. Odenathus used these forces to assist the military campaign of the emperor Valerian (r.253-260 CE) against the Persians in 260 CE. The campaign was a disaster and Valerian was captured by the Persians after the Battle of Edessa (he was either killed soon after or in around 264 CE). He was the first Roman emperor to have been captured and this further destabilised Roman control in the region as well as elsewhere in the empire.

The Persian king, Shapur I, launched several far-reaching raids into Roman territory, reaching as far as Anatolia in modern day Turkey. Valerian's son, Gallienus, became emperor (r.260-268 CE) but a usurper, Fulvius Macrinus, also claimed the throne. The army in Gaul revolted and established their own empire under Postumus (r. 260-269 CE). Meanwhile, Odenathus remained loyal to Rome (and to the rightful emperor, Gallienus) and defeated Shapur in battle in late 260 CE. He marched against Macrinus' son, Quietus, who had taken over Syria and then re-established Roman control of all the areas in the east taken by usurpers or by the Persians. He took back control of Mesopotamia, Syria, the Levant and eastern Anatolia as far as Ancyra. Gallienus, meanwhile, remained preoccupied fighting against the Gallic empire of Postumus that encompassed Gaul, Germania and Britain, and against various belligerent tribes along the Rhine and Danube rivers.

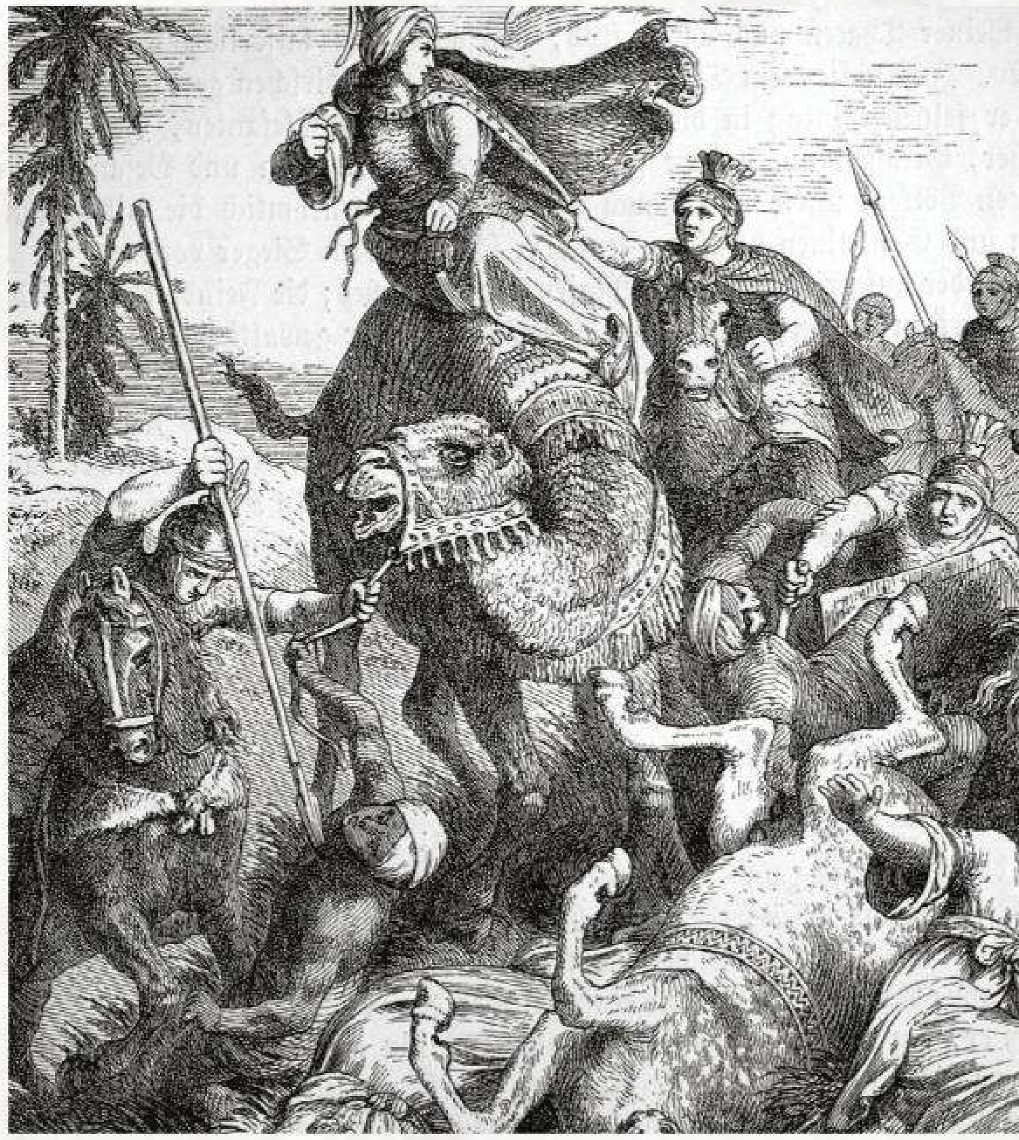
Loyal widow

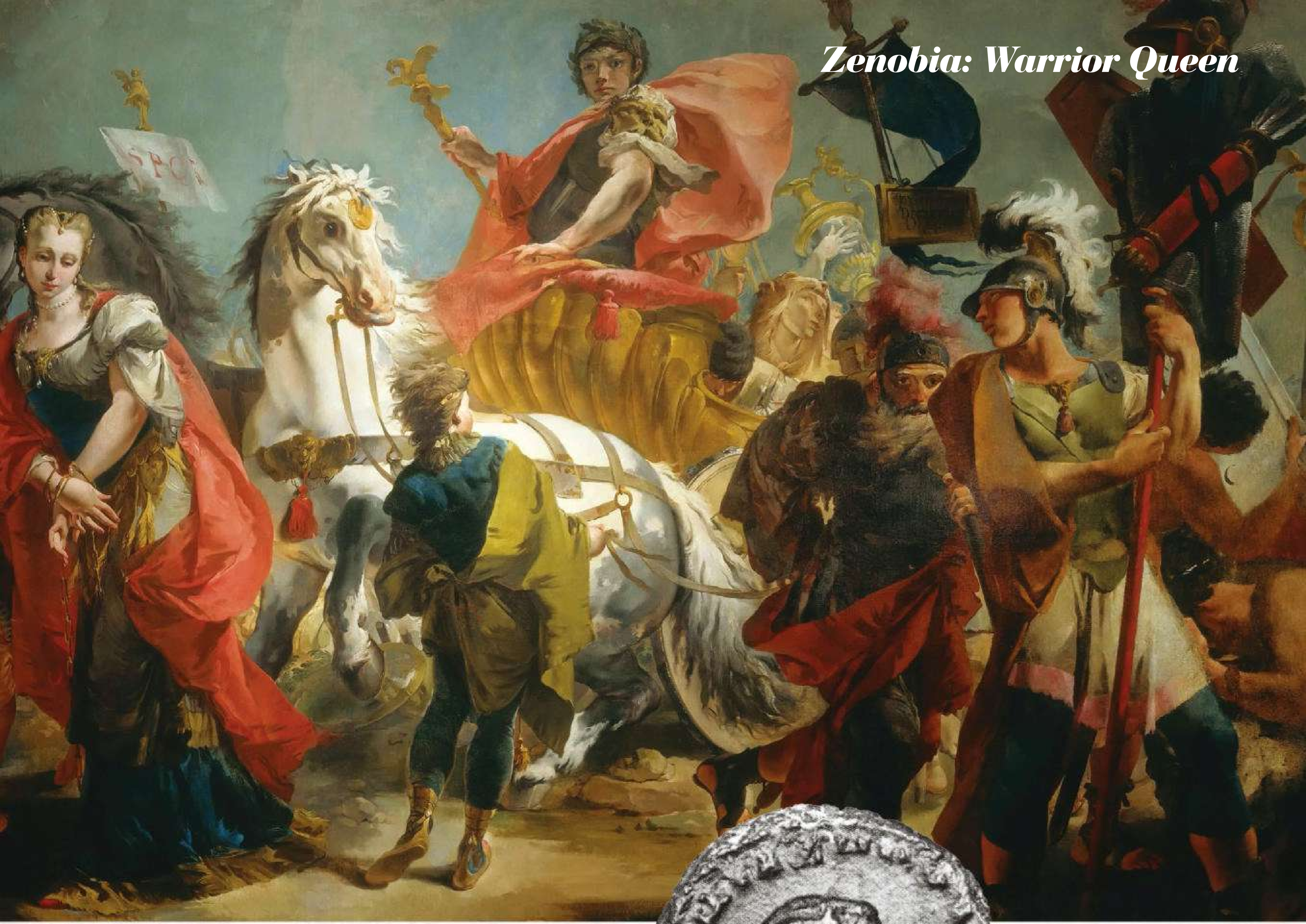
The pattern of events of the 3rd century would soon catch up with Odenathus, however. By 367 CE he had made his son Hairan co-regent of the east but both men were assassinated that year. We do not know by who. It was once claimed that an ambitious Zenobia may have done away with her husband but there is very little evidence for this. In fact, she remained loyal to her husband's memory although she also showed herself more than capable of filling his shoes. Zenobia quickly sought to have Vaballathus recognised as Odenathus' successor with command of the same troops and in the same position as de-facto ruler of the Roman east. Vaballathus can have been little more than ten years old, however, so the power behind the throne was Zenobia herself who, as dowager was also co-regent.

Zenobia was popular with the army and had campaigned with her husband (it was not unusual for senior commanders to be accompanied on campaign by their wives and families). She also had the support of commanders Zabdas and Zabbai (who may have been relatives). The strength and foresight Zenobia showed avoided a civil war in the east, all the while remaining loyal to Gallienus and Rome; all that she did was in the name of Rome and its emperor. The mints of the east only minted coins of the emperor and his successor, Claudius Gothicus (r. 268-270 CE); Gallienus had been assassinated in 268 CE. Zenobia led the way in recruiting auxiliaries from Arab tribes into her (Roman) army, and also strengthened border fortifications facing Persia along the Euphrates River.

Independence

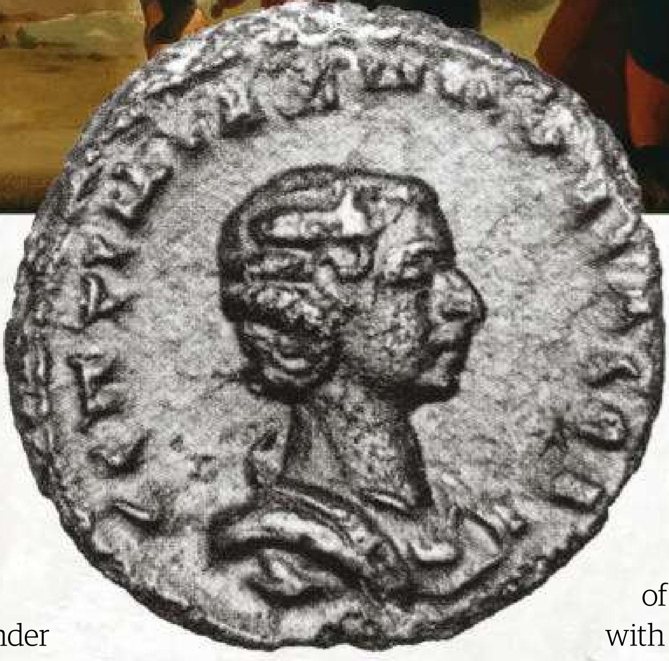
In 270 CE, however, there was an abrupt change in Zenobia's behaviour. We are





not exactly sure why, but in that year she dramatically changed course and established Palmyra as an independent and powerful kingdom in its own right that looked to expand its existing lands and carve out an empire of its own. At Rome, Claudius Gothicus died of the plague (yet another of the crises facing the empire) and was replaced by his brother Quintillus who reigned only a matter of days (the most generous estimate is 77 days) before he was assassinated by his own soldiers. This additional uncertainty may have played a part in Zenobia's bid for independence – what was it she was being loyal to exactly? Others consider that the emperor Claudius may have sought to depose her and this led to the break. Historians used to think that Zenobia had always intended to break away from Rome and had simply bided her time. This makes little sense since Gallienus had not been in a position to prevent her breaking away in 267 CE, nor, in reality, had Claudius. At Rome, the emperor Aurelian (r.270-275 CE) eventually established himself. Of lowly birth, he had risen to be Gallienius' cavalry commander and inherited an empire riven by war, all of which he would fight successfully despite his (relatively) short reign.

"ZENOBIA WAS POPULAR WITH THE ARMY AND HAD CAMPAIGNED WITH HER HUSBAND"



TOP It's believed that the captured Zenobia was paraded through Rome as part of Aurelian's Triumph upon his return

ABOVE A bronze coin of Zenobia from around 272 CE, minted in Alexandria

LEFT Faced with the might of the Roman Empire, Zenobia refused to back down

Zenobia, perhaps as early as February 270 CE, launched a campaign against the Roman province of Arabia (encompassing modern Jordan and the Levant as far as Gaza). Zenobia accompanied the army, Zabdas commanded it, and she left her general Zabbai in charge at Palmyra. One of the Arabian tribes, the Tanukh, were the ancestral enemies of Palmyra so this campaign might have been excused as still within the bounds of loyalty to Rome. The next was not. After annexing Roman Arabia, Zenobia's army crossed the Sinai Desert in the summer of 270 CE to attack Egypt with 70,000 troops. Egypt was arguably the wealthiest province of the empire; it was also the emperor's personal responsibility. An attack on Egypt signalled definitively that Zenobia had broken with Rome. Egypt fell to Zenobia with ease; Palmyrene merchants had most probably prepared the way (and told her that the Roman governor of Egypt was occupied fighting on Cyprus). The attempted counter-attack was anticipated and also defeated; Palmyra's empire now encompassed most of the eastern Roman provinces. Coinage of Zenobia and Vaballathus began to be minted claiming that he was Imperator, Caesar and Augustus (very Roman titles). Zenobia began titling herself as Augusta and Septimia Zenobia Sebaste.

Zenobia next marched on western Anatolia. Here, for the first time as far

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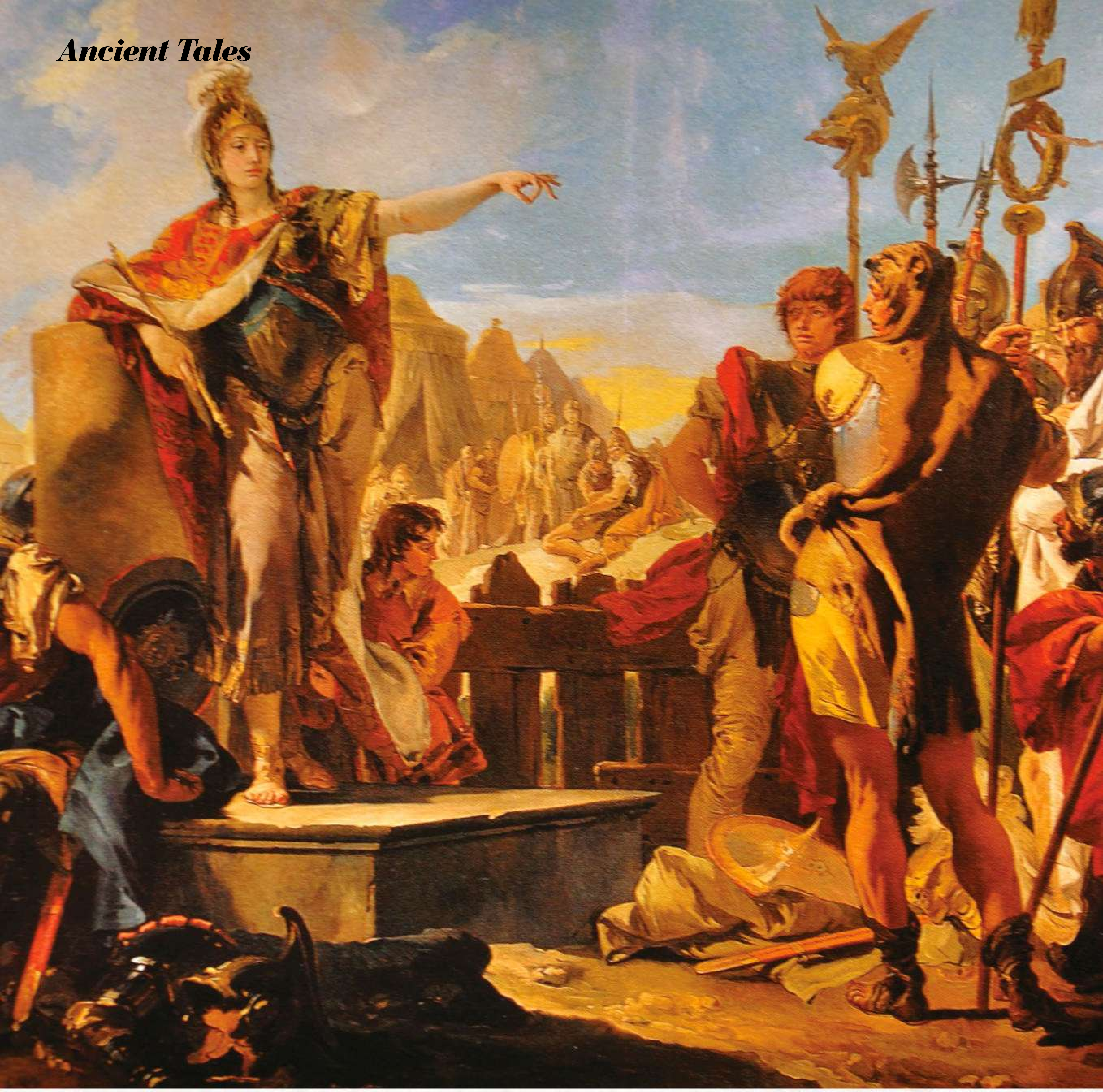


ZENOBIA TIMELINE

Key events in the life of the Palmyrene empress

240 CE

A QUEEN IS BORN

Zenobia is born into the ruling family of Palmyra and schooled in language, philosophy, horse riding and hunting. She would claim lineage with Cleopatra.

258 CE

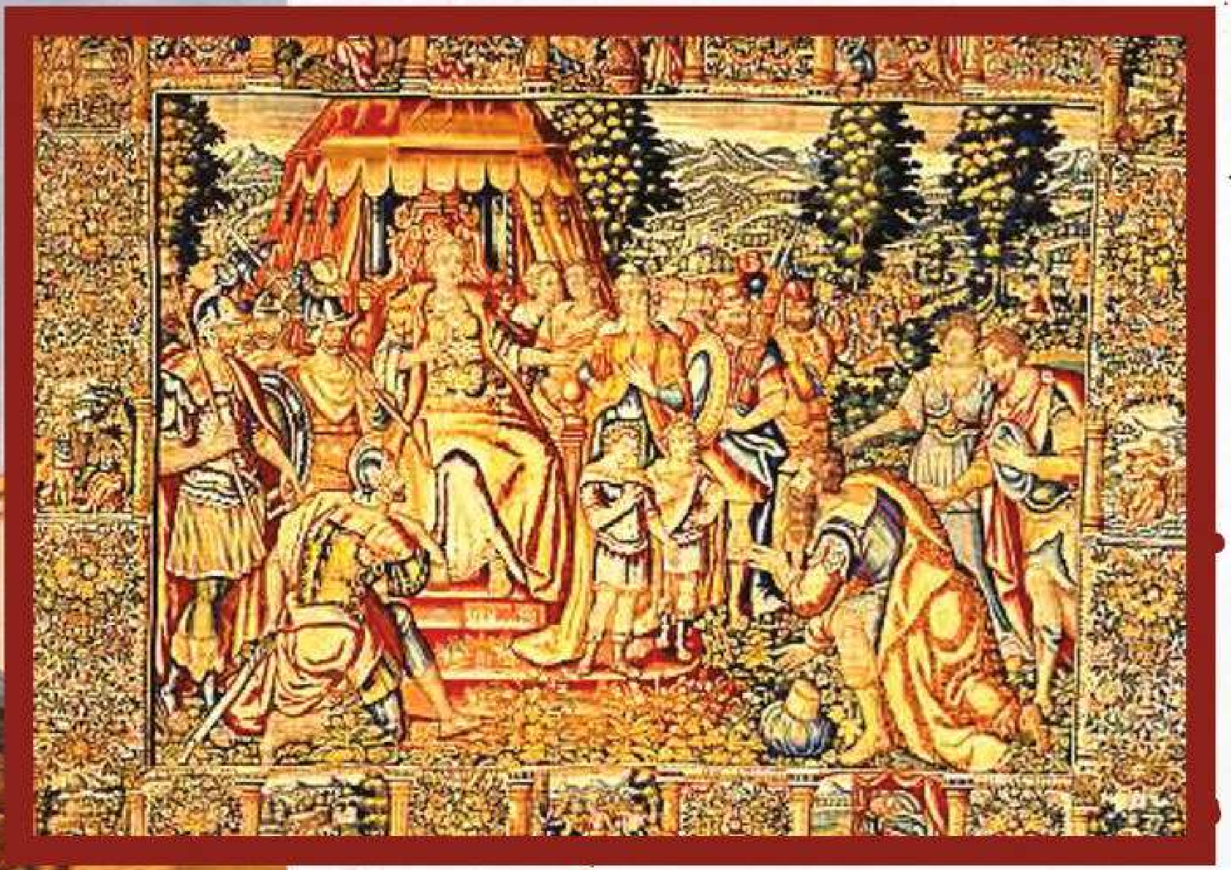
HER MATCH IN MARRIAGE

Zenobia becomes the second wife of Odaenathus, whose bravery and cunning on the battlefield are a perfect match for his ambitious young warrior bride.

259 CE

AN HEIR IN WAITING

Zenobia has a son, Vaballathus, but the direct heir to the Palmyrene throne is Hairan, a child by Odaenathus' first wife.



FAR-LEFT Not long after taking control of Palmyra, Zenobia set her eye on expanding her empire

LEFT A depiction of Zenobia sentencing Maeonius to death for the murder of her husband and step-son

as the sources tell us, she encountered local populations who were not pleased to see her. This tells us that she had probably been welcomed throughout the east, even in Egypt, as the strong hand they thought they needed, especially as a strong hand from Rome had been distinctly lacking. Unfortunately for Zenobia, that Roman hand was curling into a fist and it would not be long before it would turn towards the east to deliver a hammer blow.

ROME REACTS

Emperor Aurelian had inherited wars against the empire of Postumus, all along the Rhine and Danube, and against the breakaway empire of Palmyra. Systematically, Aurelian defeated the warring tribes along the Rhine and Danube in the years 270-272 CE and, before turning on Postumus' empire (now ruled by Tetricus I (r.271-274 CE), he marched against Palmyra later in 272 CE.

Zenobia might have been able to withdraw and paid obeisance to Aurelian although it is unlikely she would have been trusted. Instead, she chose to resist. Aurelian launched one force to re-take Egypt under his general Probus, while personally leading another into Anatolia. The cities quickly returned to their former loyalty to Rome and Aurelian advanced rapidly. Zenobia and her army awaited him near Antioch but were defeated at the Battle of Immae in 272 CE despite outnumbering the enemy. The Palmyrenes retreated to Emesa but, there, were defeated again (this time the Romans outnumbered the Palmyrenes).

Zenobia was able to escape with her son and Zabdas but lost her treasury; she retreated to Palmyra itself to await the inevitable siege. Palmyra had no walls, however, so it was probably more of a blockade. As it dragged on negotiations began, apparently offering Zenobia a dignified retirement if she surrendered. Zenobia refused. According to the *Historia Augusta*, this was due to her arrogance but the sources may have painted a particularly pro-Roman and anti-Zenobian picture. Clemency from Aurelian was far from guaranteed. What is more, several Palmyrene allies remained loyal to Palmyra even with a victorious Roman army present in the region. This suggests both widespread support for Zenobia and that trust in Rome was far from restored. Zenobia may even have considered an alliance with the Persian King Shapur I - perhaps eastern relations were considered more important than those with (distant) Rome. He did not invade but sent a small number of troops to Palmyra.

> "AS THE BLOCKADE DRAGGED ON, ZENOBIA STAGED A DARING NIGHT-TIME ESCAPE"

IGNOMINIOUS END

As the blockade dragged on, Zenobia staged a daring night-time escape. She and a small entourage, mounted on racing camels, made a dash from the city under cover of darkness, probably towards the Euphrates and safety within Persian lands. The Roman patrols were, however, able to overtake them and Zenobia was captured. Palmyra surrendered to Aurelian immediately. Zenobia was taken back to Rome and paraded in the cities along the way - shown in heavy gold chains and riding a camel, a symbol of both the east and of what happens if you betray Rome.

According to Zosimus she died along the route. According to the *Historia Augusta* she was paraded in Aurelian's Triumph in Rome in 274 CE (after Aurelian had defeated the empire of Postumus). Possibly she was kept under house arrest before that. After the Triumph she was allowed to retire to a villa at Tibur where she lived with her surviving children - only one source claims she was decapitated. She may even have married again, to a Roman senator. Her memory has transcended her end and she's remembered as an independent, romantic and tragic figure, inextricably tied up with the impressive ruins of Palmyra itself. Her story of a wise, courageous and determined queen who carved out an empire of her own has inspired artists, authors and composers throughout the ages.

266 CE
ASSASSINATION OF ODAENATHUS

Odaenathus and his eldest son die. The circumstances are unclear. His nephew Maeonius has been accused, as has Rome and Zenobia herself. Zenobia is now regent for her son.

269 CE
TAKING EGYPT

Zenobia and her trusted general march uncontested into Egypt while Rome's military are fighting off Goth invaders and Libyan pirates. Zenobia is seen as the rightful heir to Cleopatra.

270 CE
FACE FIT FOR A COIN

Zenobia orders the Alexandria mint to produce new coins featuring her silhouette and the inscription "S. Zenobia Aug", shorthand for Septimia Zenobia Augusta, Empress of the East.

271 CE
BREAD BARONESS

Zenobia further provokes Rome by cutting off Egyptian wheat exports to the imperial capital, where politicians assuage the plebeians with free bread and circuses.

272 CE
EASTERN EMPIRE

At its peak, Zenobia's Palmyrene Empire absorbs the entire eastern shore of the Mediterranean, stretching from the Nile to the Black Sea.

273 CE
AURELIAN STRIKES BACK

Having defeated the Goths, Emperor Aurelian turns his attention east to the Palmyrene Empire. Aurelian spares the citizens of conquered cities, causing even more to surrender peacefully.

274 CE
SIEGE OF PALMYRA

Aurelian attempts to strike a deal with Zenobia. She retorts with the threat of reinforcements from Persia. Aurelian surrounds and starves out the city, bringing Palmyra to its knees.

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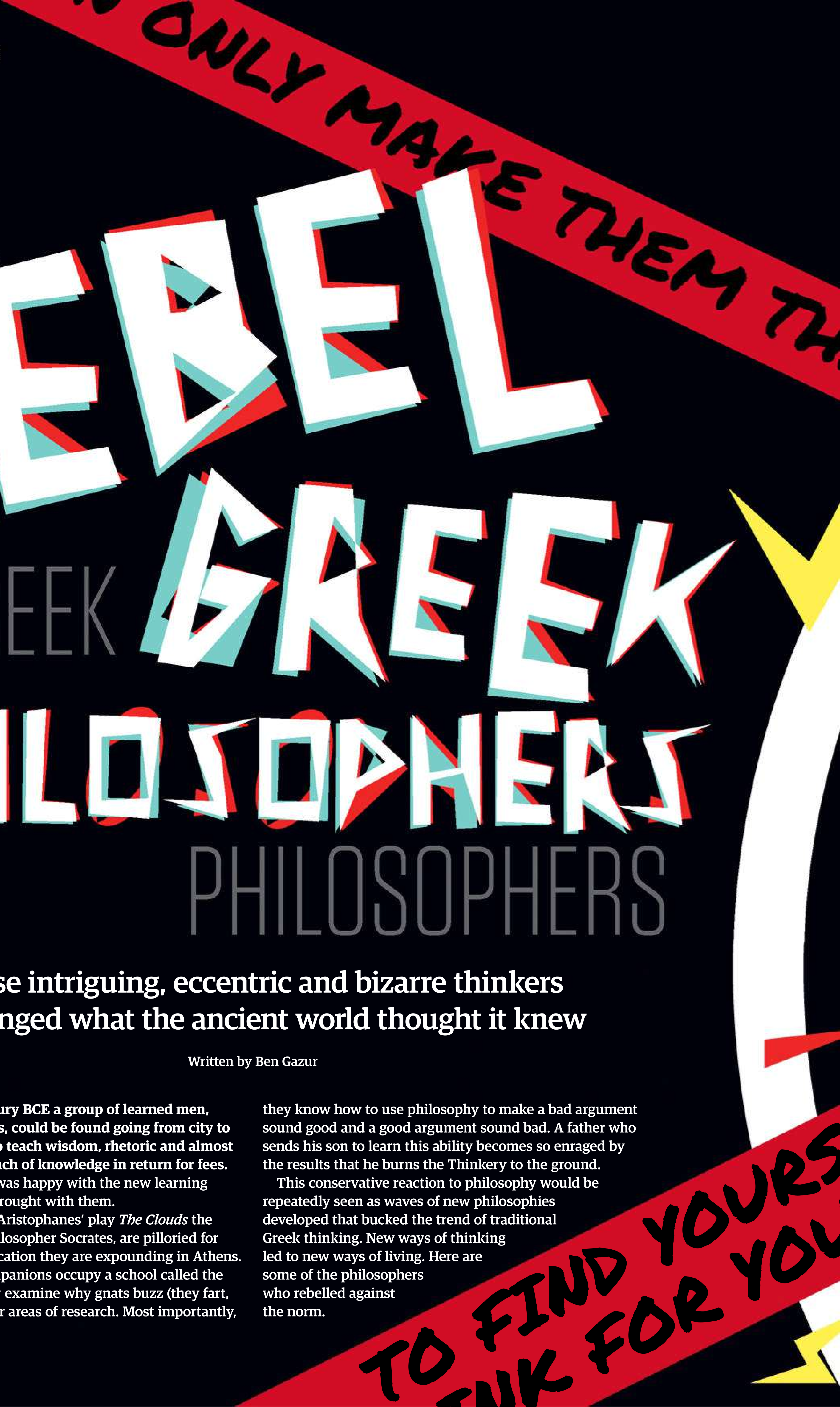
REBEL GREEK PHILOSOPHERS

REBEL
GREEK
PHILOSOPHERS



These intriguing, eccentric and bizarre thinkers challenged what the ancient world thought it knew

Written by Ben Gazur

In the 5th century BCE a group of learned men, called Sophists, could be found going from city to city offering to teach wisdom, rhetoric and almost any other branch of knowledge in return for fees. Not everyone was happy with the new learning these philosophers brought with them.

In the comic poet Aristophanes' play *The Clouds* the Sophists, and the philosopher Socrates, are pilloried for the new-fangled education they are expounding in Athens. Socrates and his companions occupy a school called the Thinkery where they examine why gnats buzz (they fart, apparently) and other areas of research. Most importantly, they know how to use philosophy to make a bad argument sound good and a good argument sound bad. A father who sends his son to learn this ability becomes so enraged by the results that he burns the Thinkery to the ground.

This conservative reaction to philosophy would be repeatedly seen as waves of new philosophies developed that bucked the trend of traditional Greek thinking. New ways of thinking led to new ways of living. Here are some of the philosophers who rebelled against the norm.

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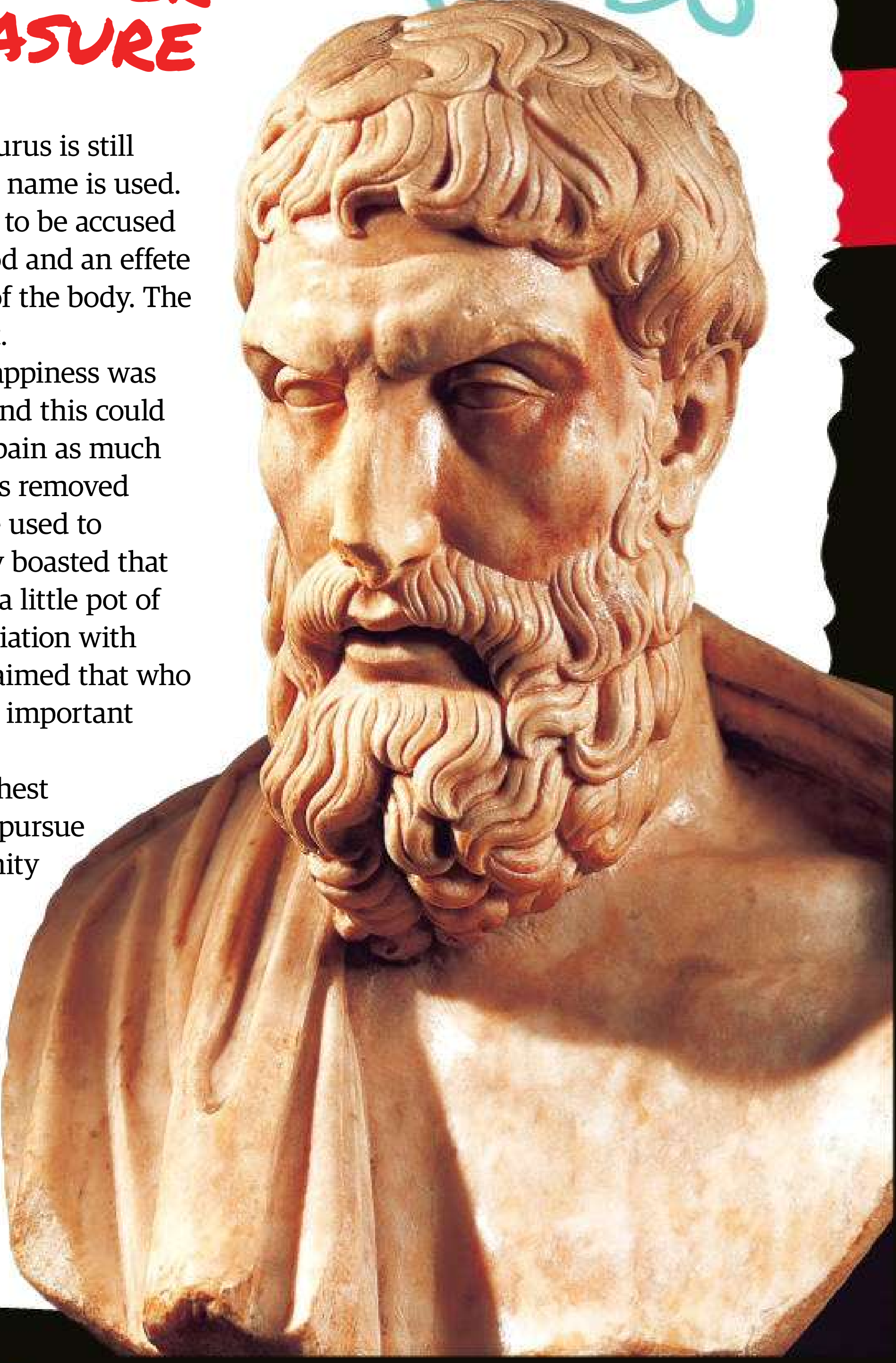
OR

EPICURUS

EPICURUS

PHILOSOPHER OF PLEASURE

341-270 BCE



The reaction against Epicurus is still seen today in the way his name is used. To be called an epicure is to be accused of obsession with fine food and an effete interest in the pleasures of the body. The reality was quite different.

Epicurus taught that happiness was the goal of the good life and this could be achieved by reducing pain as much as possible. Once pain was removed simple pleasures could be used to enhance life. He famously boasted that he could have a feast on "a little pot of cheese." Despite his association with grand consumption he claimed that who one dined with was more important than what one dined on.

Friendship was the highest pleasure for Epicurus. To pursue this he created a community called The Garden where philosophically minded friends could live together in serene isolation. At a time when women and slaves were barely viewed as fully human The Garden welcomed both to join it.

PROTAGORAS

PROTAGORAS

THE FATHER OF RELATIVISM

490-420 BCE

What is truth? That's a question that runs through Western philosophy. Protagoras of Abdera was not the first to tackle this conundrum but his answers were shocking to many thinkers of his day, and even today. In his book called *Truth* he states: "Man is the measure of all things." Plato takes this to mean that there is no objective truth at all. What seems true to you is true to you, and what is true to someone else is true to them. Such a bold relativistic view would make dialogue between people impossible if we cannot even agree on basic facts.

What Protagoras probably meant, however, is that we must take into account a person's lived experiences and foundational beliefs when assessing statements. This acknowledgment of individual viewpoints makes Protagoras a thoroughly modern thinker.

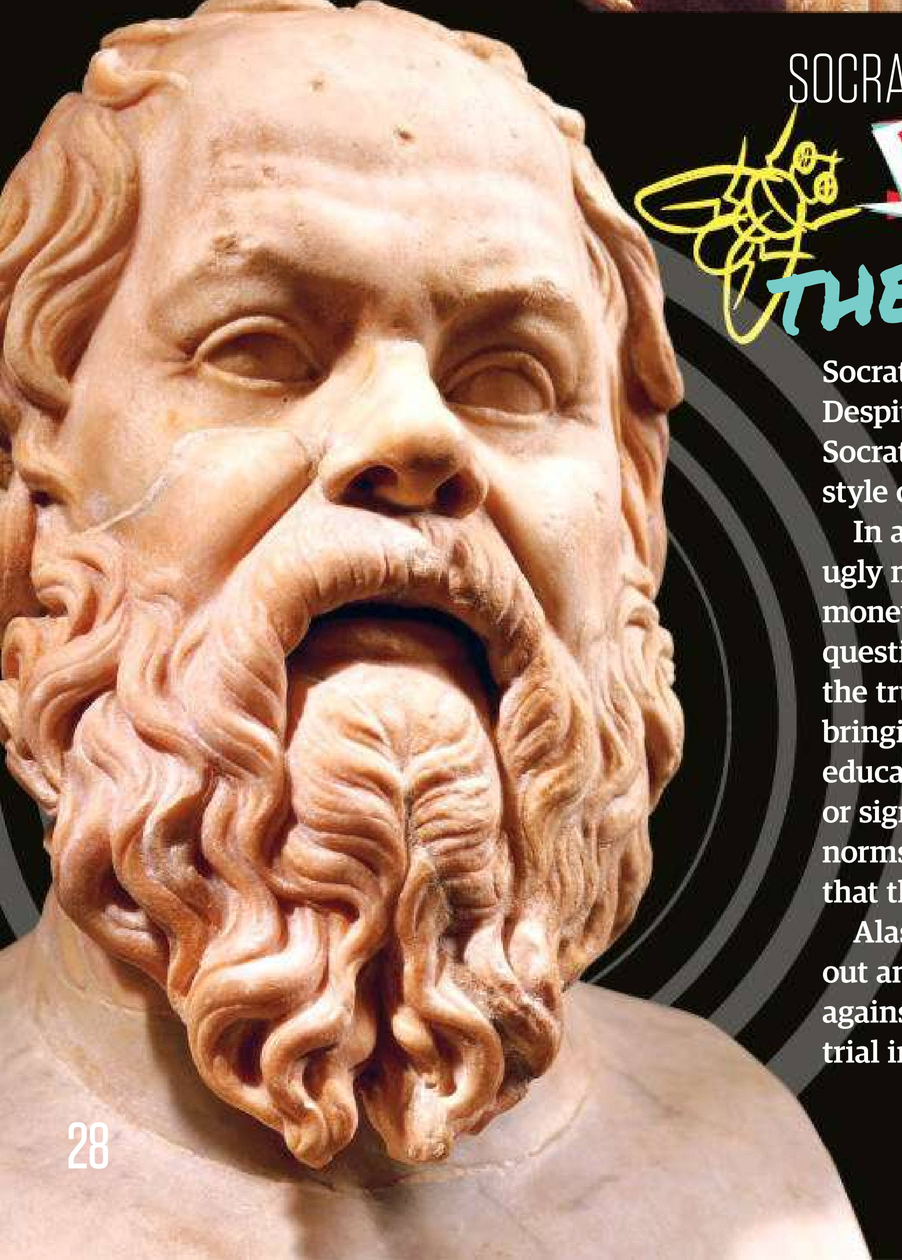
He was also one of the first open agnostics in history. He wrote: "About the gods I am able to know neither that they exist nor that they do not exist nor of what kind they are in form."

SOCRATES

SOCRATES

THE GADFLY OF ATHENS

470-399 BCE



Socrates is regarded by many as the father of Western philosophy. Despite never writing down any of his philosophy we feel we know Socrates through the texts of his pupils Plato and Xenophon. It is the style of his life - and death - that have been most influential.

In a culture that prized physical beauty Socrates was a notably ugly man. He dressed shabbily and unlike the Sophists never took money for teaching. He could be found in the marketplace asking questions to everyone about everything, in the hope of discovering the true form of wisdom and virtue. This Socratic method of bringing out the truth by questioning has been influential in education ever since. Socrates claimed that he was guided by a voice or sign that only he could sense. By not limiting himself to the social norms of his day Socrates hoped to expose the limitations in others that they did not even know they had.

Alas, the people of Athens wearied of having their flaws pointed out and were angered by several of Socrates' students turning against the Athenian democracy. He was forced to kill himself after a trial in which he was charged with impiety.

GORGIAS

GORGIAS

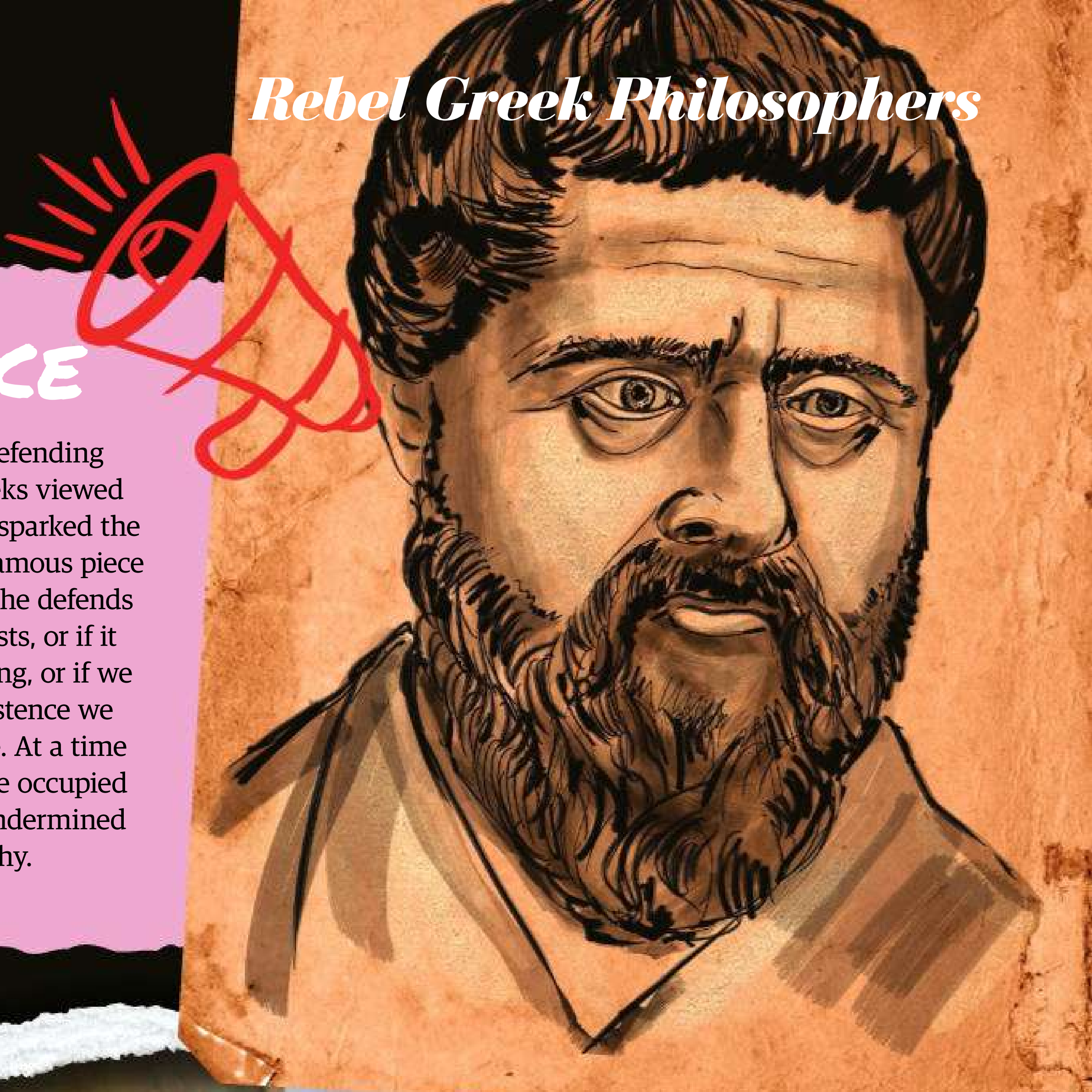
MISEDUCATOR OF GREECE

483-375 BCE

Gorgias of Leontini exemplified all of people's fears about what Sophists would do to the young. As a teacher of rhetoric he showed how any argument can be made persuasive. The presence of Gorgias looms over many of Plato's dialogues as many of the people Socrates is shown in discussion with have been taught (or as Plato would see it, mis-taught) by Gorgias.

Gorgias is sometimes called 'the Nihilist' because of the extremely unorthodox views he at times expounded.

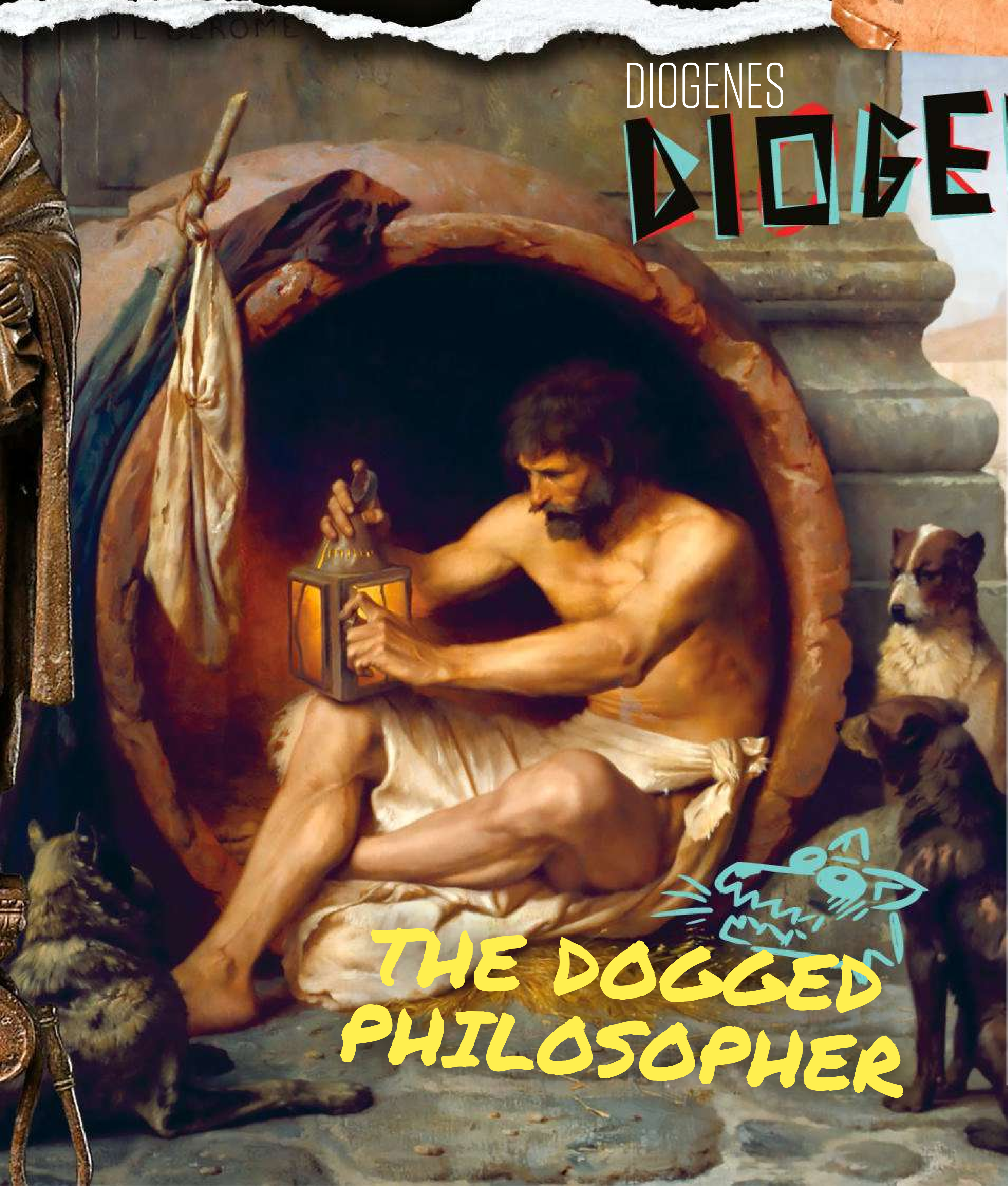
One of his works is a speech defending Helen of Troy when most Greeks viewed her as a seductive villain who sparked the bloody Trojan War. His most famous piece is titled *On not-being* in which he defends the idea that nothing at all exists, or if it exists we cannot know anything, or if we do know something about existence we cannot express our knowledge. At a time when the search for knowledge occupied many philosophers, Gorgias undermined the entire purpose of philosophy.



DIOGENES

DIOGENES

5TH CENTURY – 323 BCE



THE DOGGED PHILOSOPHER

Of all the ancient philosophers none lived a more radical life than Diogenes of Sinope. He dedicated his every moment to showing up the pretensions of those around him. Diogenes was often compared to a dog because of his wild ways and biting sayings. It is from the Greek word for dog that the Cynic philosophers who followed Diogenes got their name.

Diogenes famously went without all luxuries to show just how little a human needs to live. He lived rough on the streets of Athens inside a large tub. When he realised he could drink water from his hands he threw away his bowl. When Alexander the Great stood over Diogenes and asked if he wanted anything, the philosopher only asked that the king move a little to the side as he was blocking the sun.

Many of the antics ascribed to Diogenes were designed to shock people out of their assumptions about how they had to live. Eating in public was taboo but he defended himself when seen doing so by explaining that he was outside when he was hungry. When seen masturbating in the marketplace he commented: "If only it were so easy to soothe hunger by rubbing an empty belly."

Diogenes might have been a nightmare neighbour but as a philosopher he made quite the impression.

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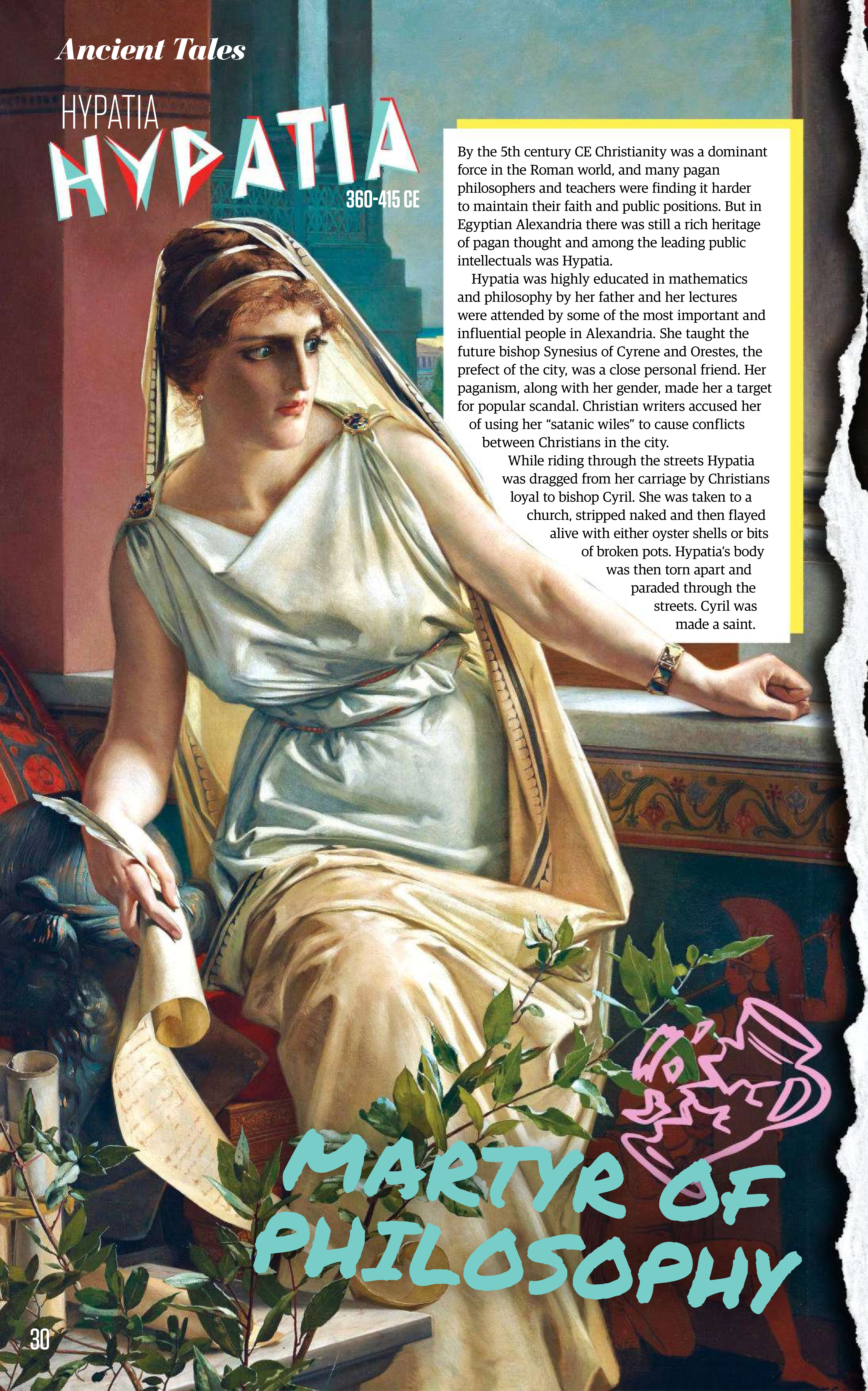
HYPATIA

HYPATIA

360-415 CE

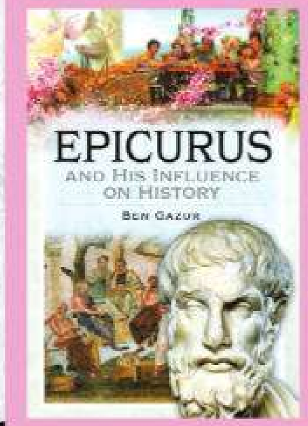


By the 5th century CE Christianity was a dominant force in the Roman world, and many pagan philosophers and teachers were finding it harder to maintain their faith and public positions. But in Egyptian Alexandria there was still a rich heritage of pagan thought and among the leading public intellectuals was Hypatia.

Hypatia was highly educated in mathematics and philosophy by her father and her lectures were attended by some of the most important and influential people in Alexandria. She taught the future bishop Synesius of Cyrene and Orestes, the prefect of the city, was a close personal friend. Her paganism, along with her gender, made her a target for popular scandal. Christian writers accused her of using her "satanic wiles" to cause conflicts between Christians in the city.

While riding through the streets Hypatia was dragged from her carriage by Christians loyal to bishop Cyril. She was taken to a church, stripped naked and then flayed alive with either oyster shells or bits of broken pots. Hypatia's body was then torn apart and paraded through the streets. Cyril was made a saint.

MARTYR OF PHILOSOPHY



EPICURUS AND HIS INFLUENCE ON HISTORY by Ben Gazur is available out now, published by Pen and Sword Books

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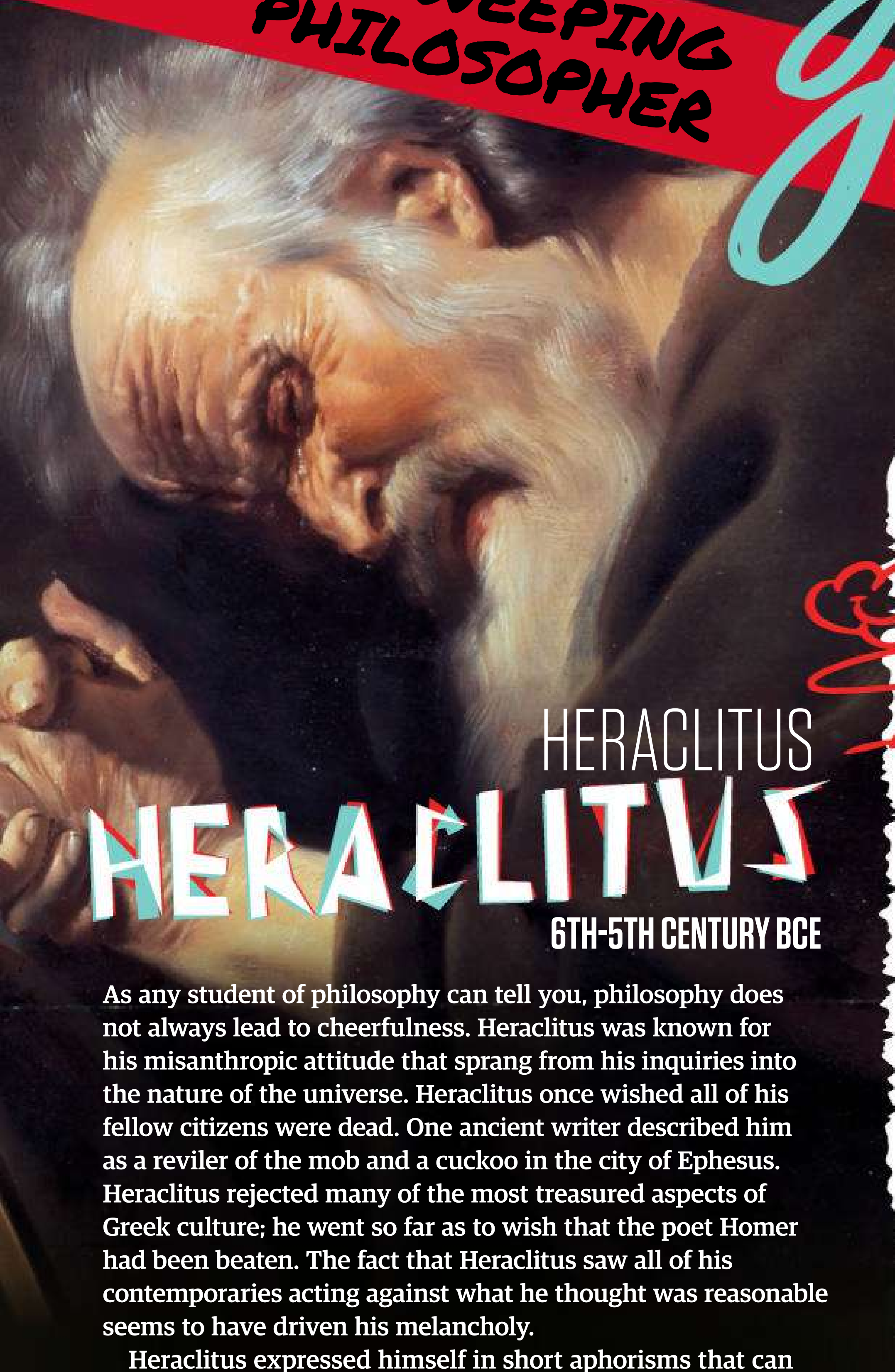


THE WEEPING PHILOSOPHER

HERACLITUS

HERACLITUS

6TH-5TH CENTURY BCE

As any student of philosophy can tell you, philosophy does not always lead to cheerfulness. Heraclitus was known for his misanthropic attitude that sprang from his inquiries into the nature of the universe. Heraclitus once wished all of his fellow citizens were dead. One ancient writer described him as a reviler of the mob and a cuckoo in the city of Ephesus. Heraclitus rejected many of the most treasured aspects of Greek culture; he went so far as to wish that the poet Homer had been beaten. The fact that Heraclitus saw all of his contemporaries acting against what he thought was reasonable seems to have driven his melancholy.

Heraclitus expressed himself in short aphorisms that can be hard to understand. The obscure meanings of Heraclitus led to him being call 'the Obscure'. He was famous for sayings like "Everything flows" and "No man can step into the same river twice."

Heraclitus died by burying himself in a dung heap in hopes that the heat of the rotting manure would drive out the water collecting in his body.

DEMOCRITUS

DEMOCRITUS

THE ATOMIC THINKER

460-370 BCE

Today the idea that matter is composed of tiny particles is so familiar that it is hard to imagine it ever being a radical notion. Atomic theory was only fully accepted towards the end of the 19th century but it originated with Democritus thousands of years before. He believed that all things could be explained by the nature of these atoms.

It was not only in science that Democritus blazed a trail. Because of his radically materialist theory he found much of what concerned other philosophers to be comic. If everything is due to the motion of atoms then much of ethical philosophy and our social customs become absurd. Democritus was so amused by the behaviour of his fellow citizens as they went about their lives that he became known as 'the Laughing Philosopher'.

By putting forward the theory of a deterministic universe Democritus issued a challenge to traditional notions of free will and religion that are still much debated today.

PYTHAGORAS

PYTHAGORAS

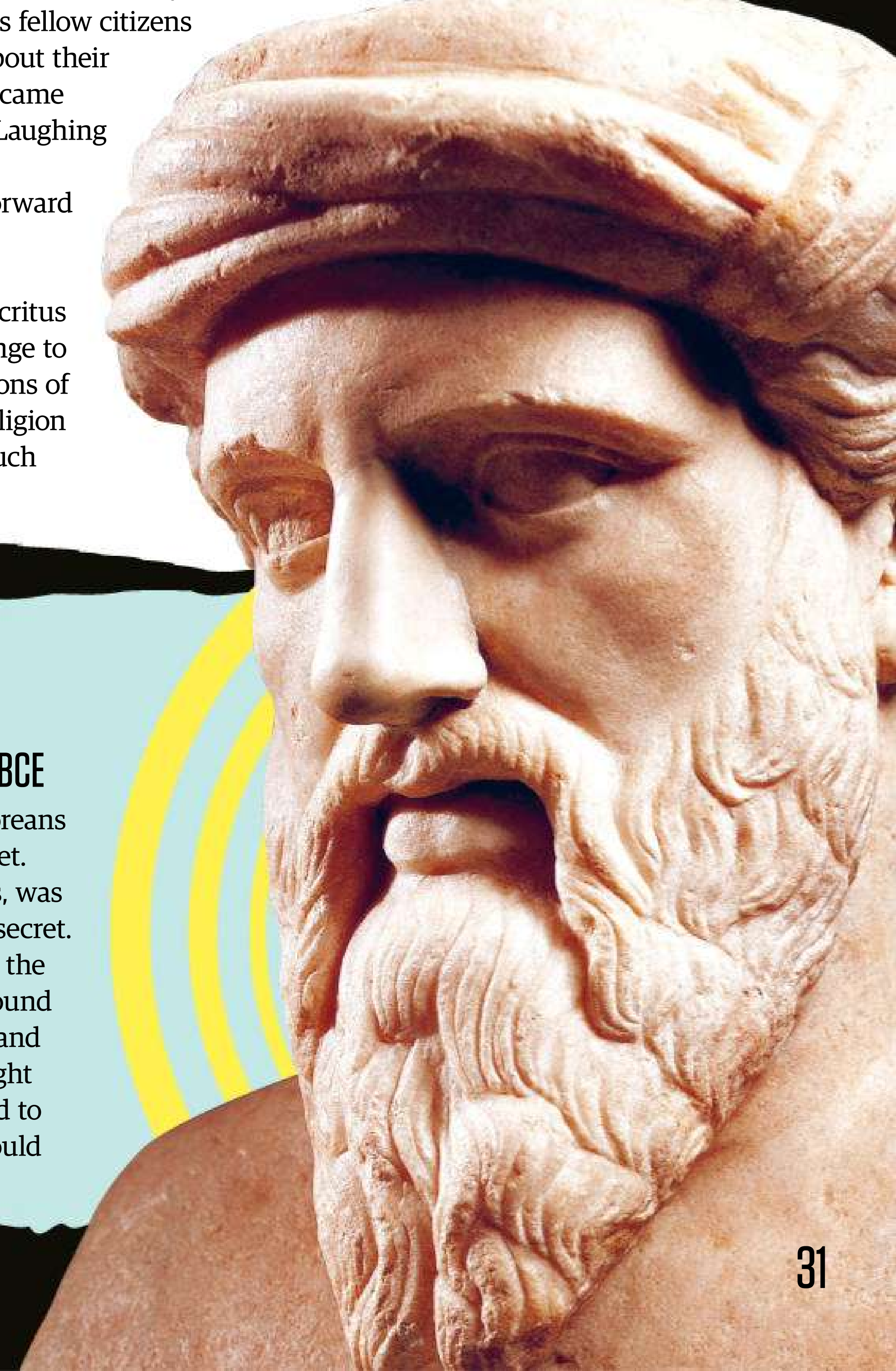
MORE THAN TRIANGLES

570-495 BCE

Pythagoras was not just a researcher in mathematics - his theories took in everything from the order of the universe, the transmigration of souls and the right foods to eat. Were he alive today he would likely be considered a cult leader.

Followers of Pythagoras lived together in communes and followed very specific rules set out by their leader. They were not allowed to eat fish or meat, and were especially forbidden from eating beans. Abstention from animals made sense as human souls could be reincarnated into animal bodies. Much of what Pythagoreans learned was held as a closely guarded secret. One story tells how one follower, Hippasus, was put to death for revealing a mathematical secret.

For their strange way of life and secrecy the Pythagoreans were distrusted by those around them. Their commune was once attacked and Pythagoras was forced to flee. He was caught and killed by his pursuers when he refused to run through a field of beans because he could not bring himself to harm the vegetables.



TUTANK

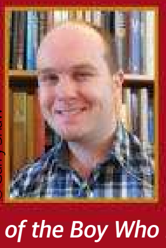
HAMUN

Written by Garry J Shaw

How Egypt's legendary boy king came to power and who was really in control

Illustration by: Joe Cummings

EXPERT BIO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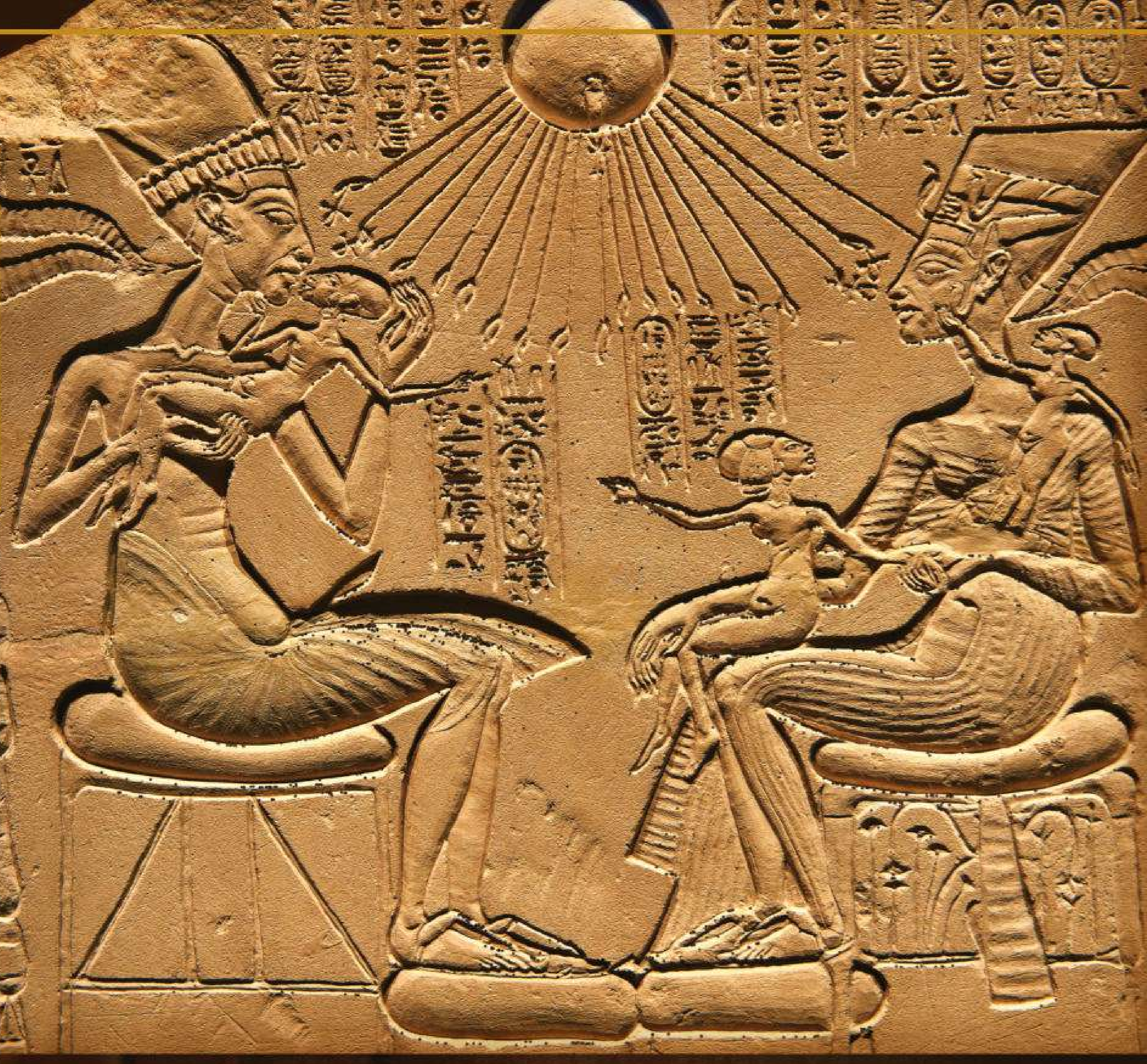
GARRY J SHAW

Garry Shaw is an author and journalist covering archaeology, history and world heritage. He has a PhD in Egyptology, and his new book *The Story of Tutankhamun: An Intimate Life of the Boy Who Became King*, will be published by Yale University Press on 11 October.

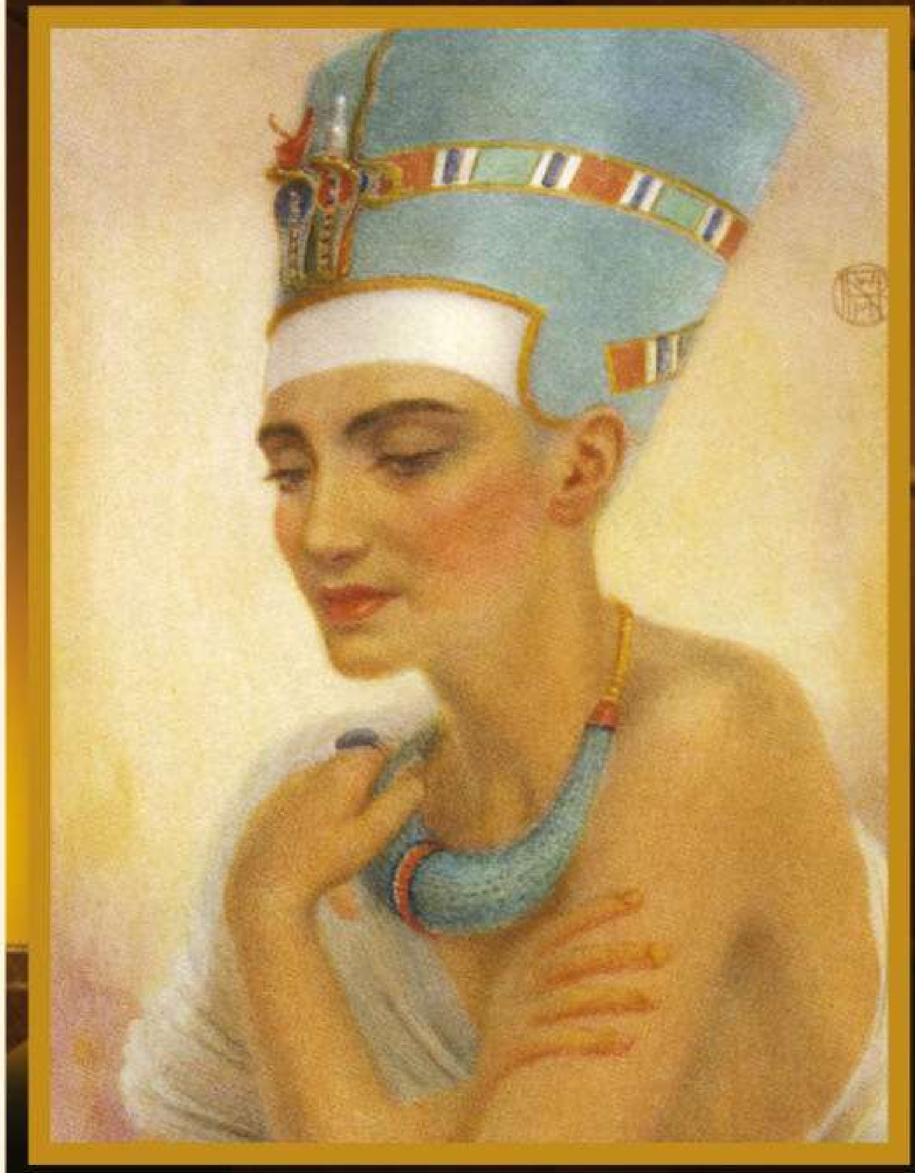
Follow him on Twitter @GarryShawEgypt and Instagram @garryjshaw



Tutankhamun – originally called Tutankhaten – was born around 1329 BCE. This was a time of great upheaval in Egypt, when the prince's father, King Akhenaten, had reformed the country's millennia-old traditions. With Queen Nefertiti, he had turned his back on the gods in favour of an obscure deity the Aten, or sun disc. As Akhenaten's reign progressed, the god Amun, king of the gods, was targeted for attacks. The king's followers smashed Amun's statues across Egypt and scratched away his name from monuments. Amun represented all that was hidden, so Akhenaten perhaps regarded him as the antithesis of the Aten's all-encompassing, life-giving light.

But as the years passed, other gods were attacked too. To symbolise Egypt's new beginning, Akhenaten moved the royal court to a newly built city in the desert, which he called Akhetaten – the Horizon of the Aten – today called Amarna. For years, people hauled blocks of stone from nearby quarries to build its temples, and worked in the intense heat making mud bricks for elite villas and palaces. The homes of the poor grew around these villas, and as the city developed, its workers died in large numbers; malnourished, overworked, and often young, they were buried on the outskirts of the city and forgotten. They paid the price for Akhenaten's dreams.

With this dramatic shift in religious devotion, Egypt's art style changed too. Directed by the king, the Amarna artists produced statues and carvings quite unlike any that came before or after him. Despite wearing the traditional regalia of a pharaoh, Akhenaten was carved with a round belly and spindly legs and arms – far from the youthful, muscular and fit bodies that pharaohs typically chose for their official art. Temples changed too. Gone were their dark and mysterious sanctuaries, where the gods' statues stood in shrines, awaiting gifts and praise from priests. Temples to the Aten were open to the sky, embracing the sun's rays, which reached down to touch hundreds of offering tables laden with food and drink. This was the new Egypt in which Tutankhamun grew up.



TOP A stele from Amarna showing King Akhenaten (left) and Queen Nefertiti (right) with three of their daughters beneath the Aten's rays. The future Queen Ankhesenamun is on Nefertiti's shoulder

ABOVE Nefertiti was not Tutankhamun's birth mother, but would have been an important influence on his life

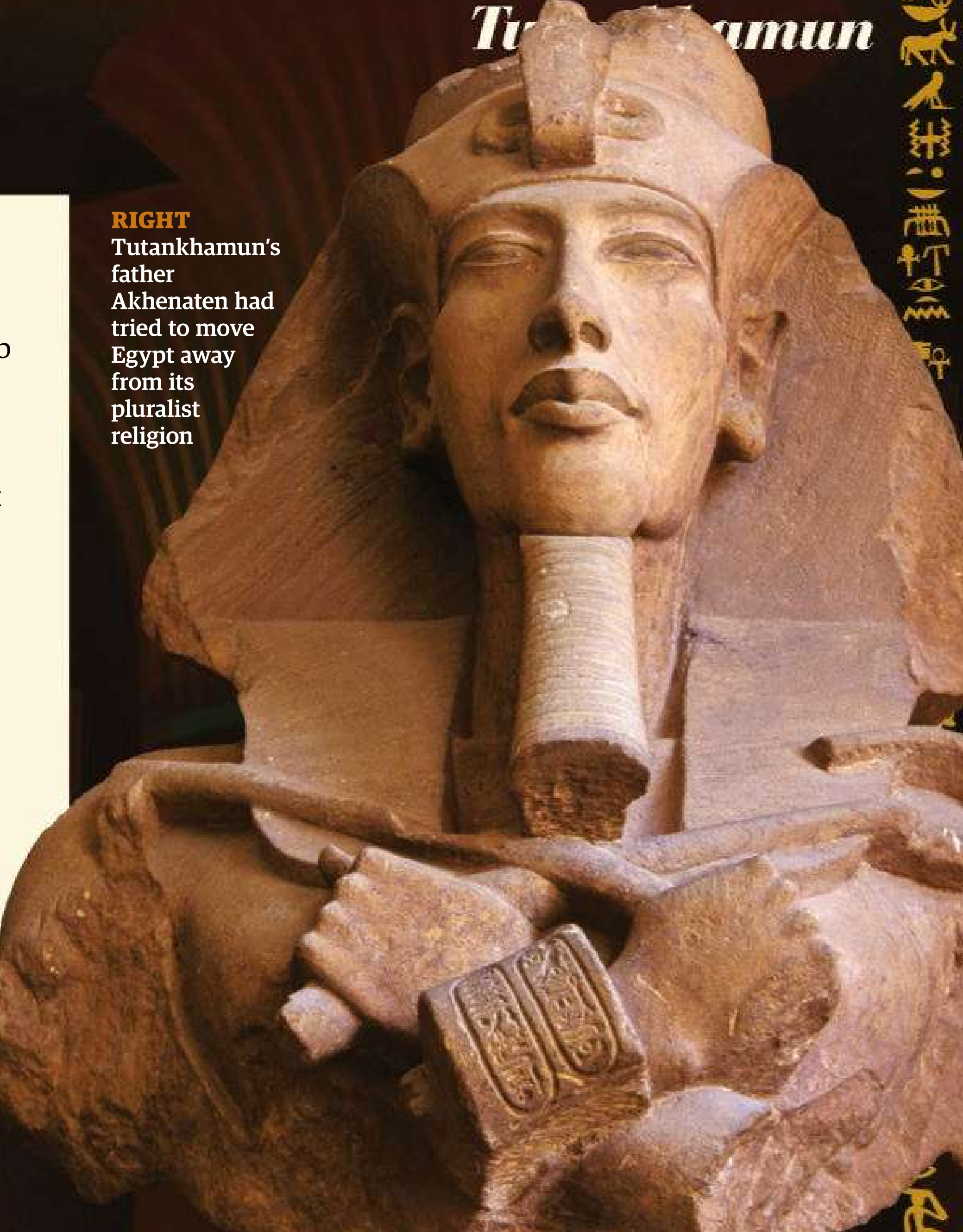
Tutankhamun was the son of Akhenaten and one of the king's sisters. He spent his earliest years with his wet-nurse, Maia, who later had a tomb built for herself at the ancient necropolis of Saqqara. Within, she included a scene of the young prince sitting on her lap. Around age four, while Amarna remained under construction, Tutankhamun began his education. One of his tutors was a man named Sennedjem who, among his duties, taught the young king to ride chariots, perhaps near the city of Akhmim where the tutor would eventually be buried. To keep his hands and feet safe from rocks and sand as he rode along, Tutankhamun wore gloves

> "As a child, Tutankhamun must have been heavily influenced by his father's new vision for Egypt"

and socks - not unusual for a charioteer. He carried his love of riding into his teenage years.

The young prince also learned how to read and write. He owned scribal equipment that bore his name, and dipped his red ink-covered pen into one water pot so often that the pot became stained. If he followed the typical curriculum of a scribal student, Tutankhamun first studied the cursive script hieratic, used in administration and correspondence, before moving on to the sacred hieroglyphs found on the walls of tombs and temples. With his tutors' guidance, he would have spent a great deal of time copying and recopying set texts, including already ancient classics such as *The Tale of Sinuhe*, about a courtier who fled to the Levant, and wisdom texts attributed to the great kings of the past. Certain teachings perhaps came directly from Akhenaten. The king saw himself as a teacher to his courtiers and composed hymns to the Aten, which were copied onto their tomb walls. As a child, Tutankhamun must have been heavily influenced by his father's new vision for Egypt. He would have accepted the closure of the ancient temples and the destruction of divine statues as normal.

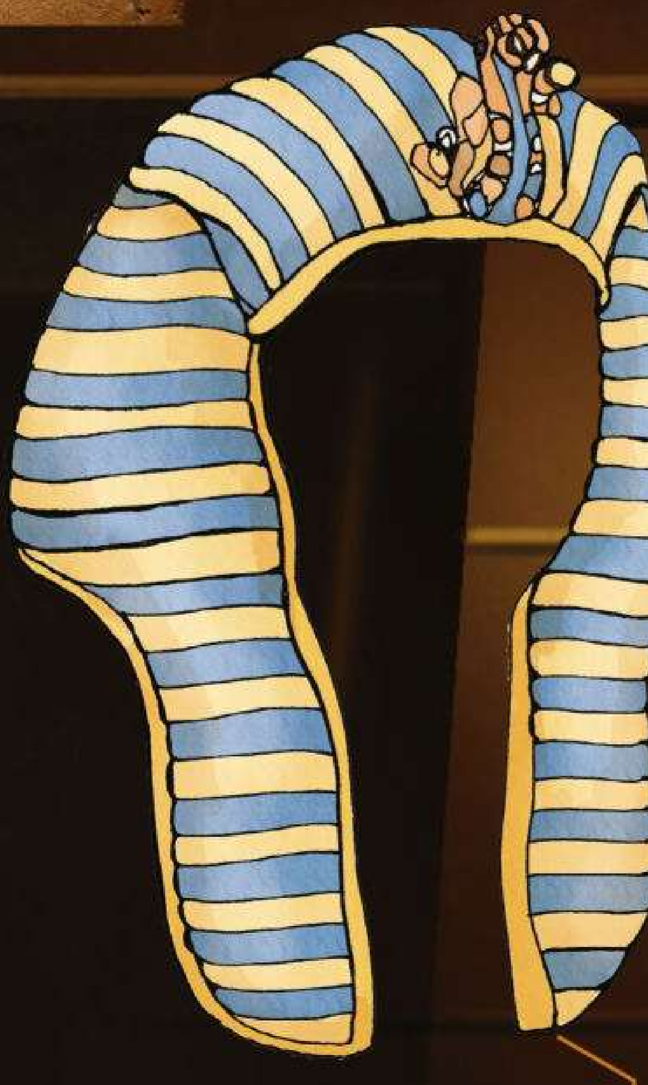
But this new world didn't last. Akhenaten died after 17 years as king, plunging his religious experiment into uncertainty. This was not the first emotional pain that Tutankhamun had felt in his short life. Over the years, multiple tragedies had struck the royal family. Three of Tutankhamun's half-sisters had died, as had his grandmother, Queen Tiye, plus the obscure co-regent Smenkhkare and a secondary queen named Kiya. ▶



RIGHT Tutankhamun's father Akhenaten had tried to move Egypt away from its pluralist religion

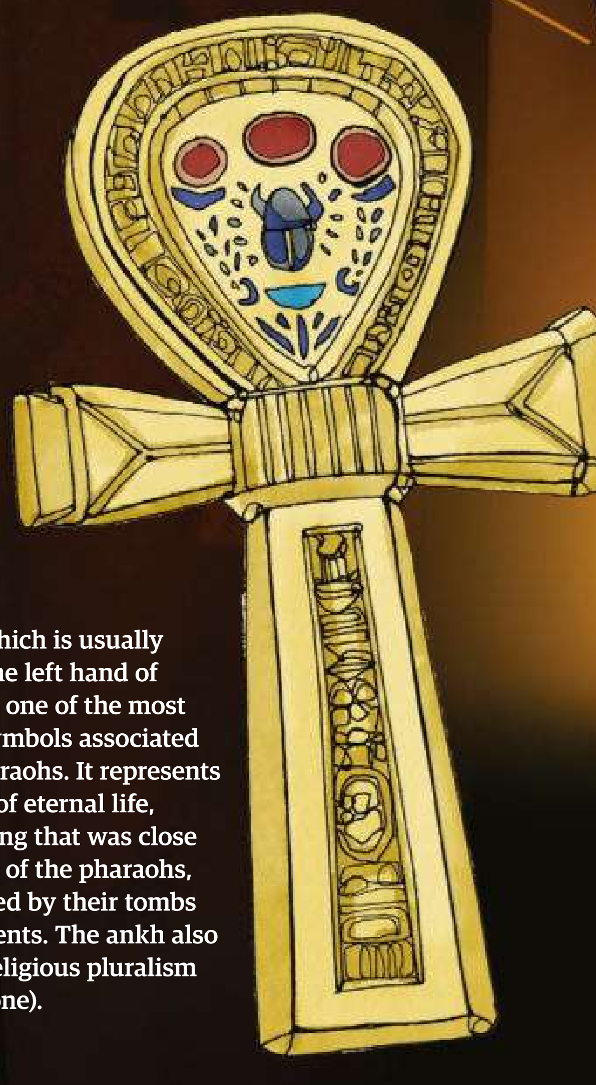
SYMBOLS OF POWER

Items that helped pharaohs exude wealth and authority



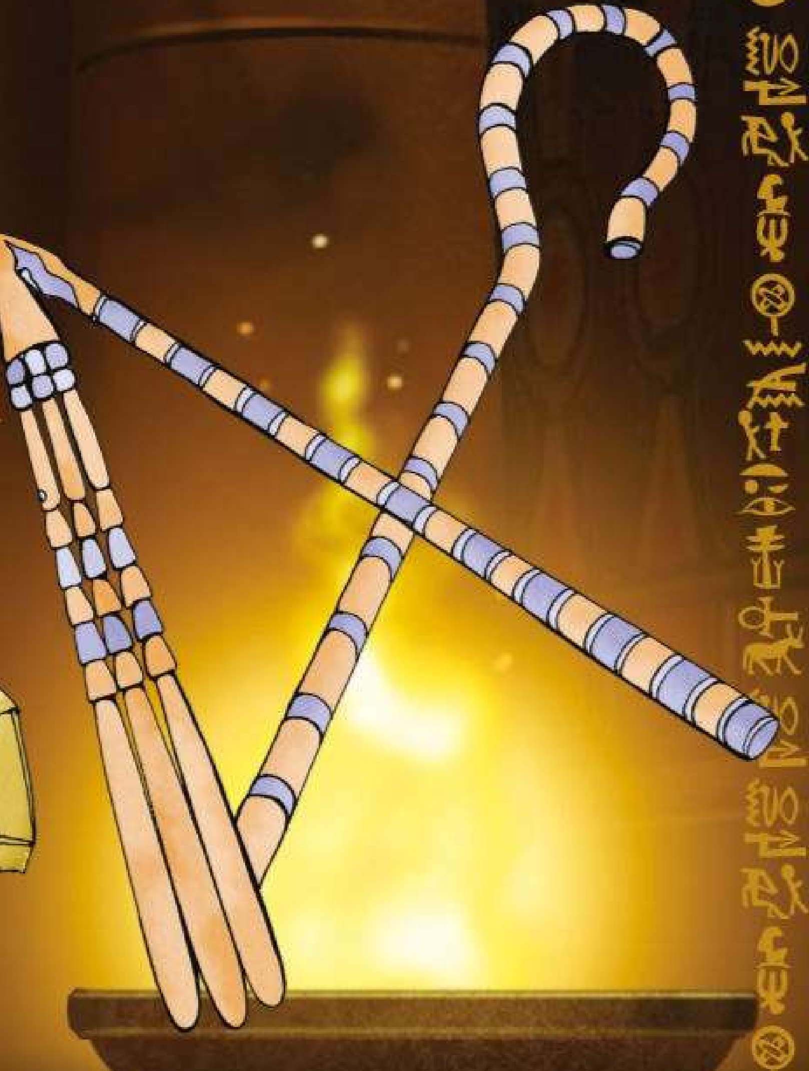
NEMES HEADDRESS

Less of a crown and more a symbol of a pharaoh's power, the nemes was a headdress that covered the whole crown, the back of the head and the nape of the neck. Usually striped with gold (to represent the ruler's wealth), the nemes had two large flaps that hung behind the ears and draped over the front of the shoulders.



ANKH

The ankh, which is usually grasped in the left hand of a pharaoh, is one of the most important symbols associated with the pharaohs. It represents the concept of eternal life, a state of being that was close to the hearts of the pharaohs, as represented by their tombs and monuments. The ankh also represents religious pluralism (all gods as one).



CROOK AND FLAIL

Originally linked solely to the god Osiris, the crook and flail later became a combined symbol of pharaonic authority. The shepherd's crook stood for the power and responsibility of kingship, while the flail was shorthand for the fertility of the land.

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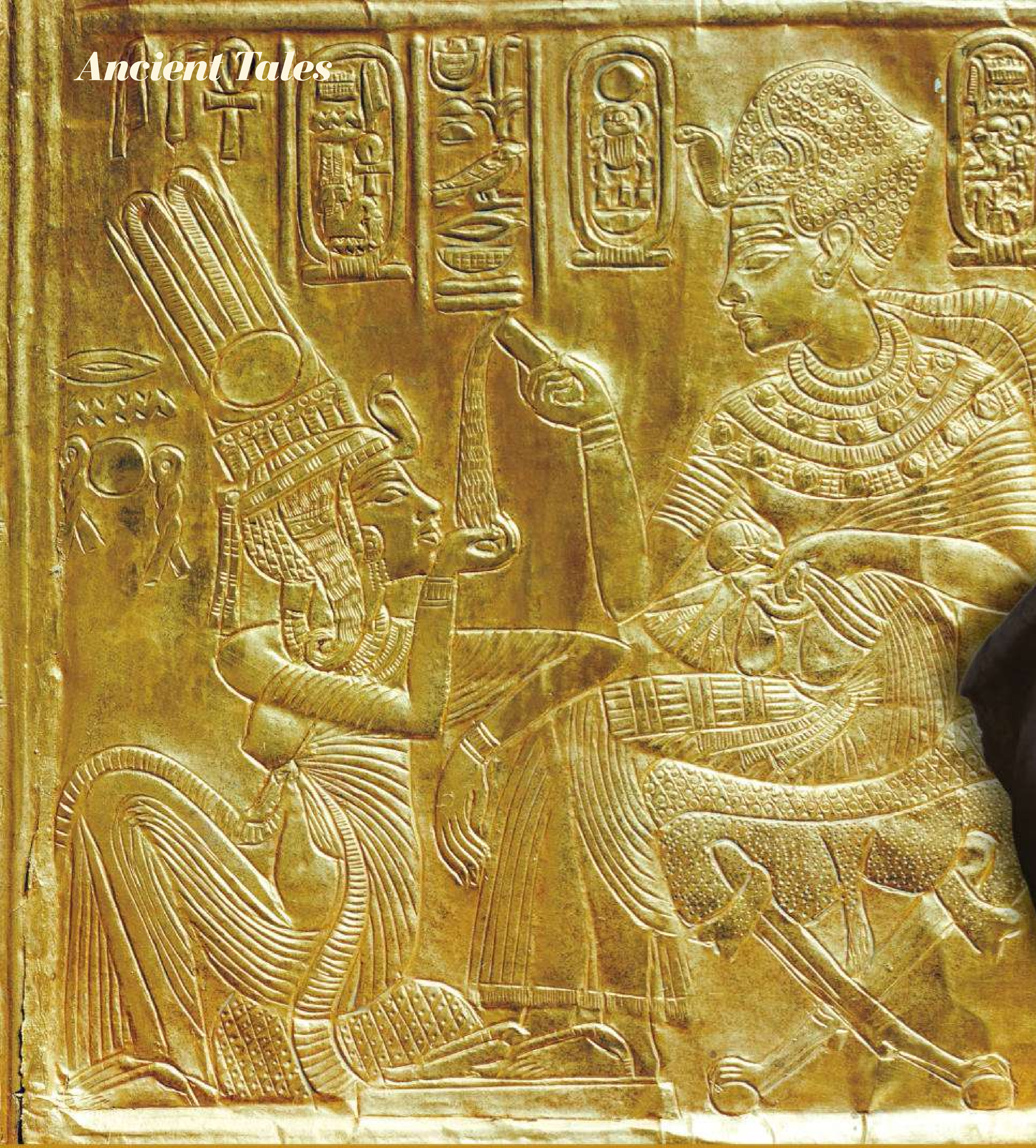
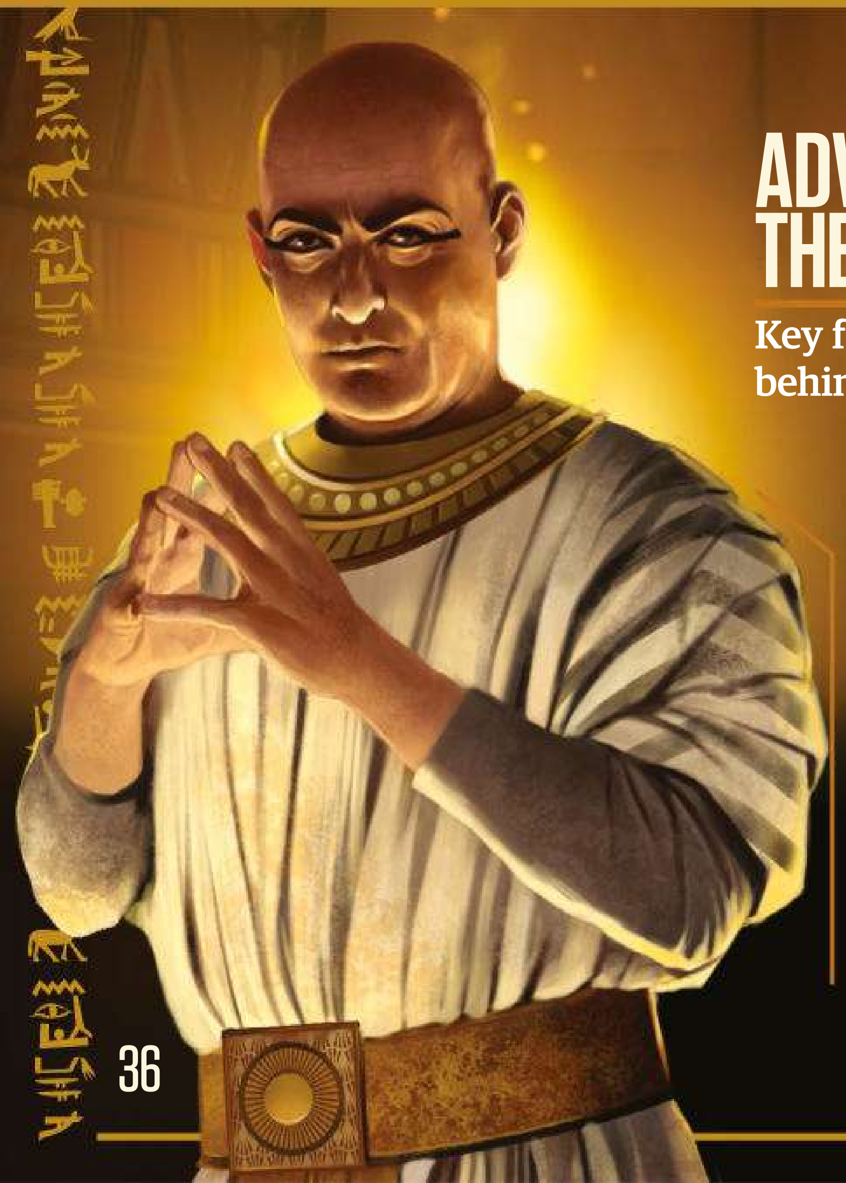


LEFT King Tutankhamun pours water onto the hand of his wife, Queen Ankhesenamun. Both were married at a young age and were half siblings

BELOW A god's hand touches the back of Tutankhamun's Blue Crown, indicating that the complete statue represented a ritual from the king's coronation

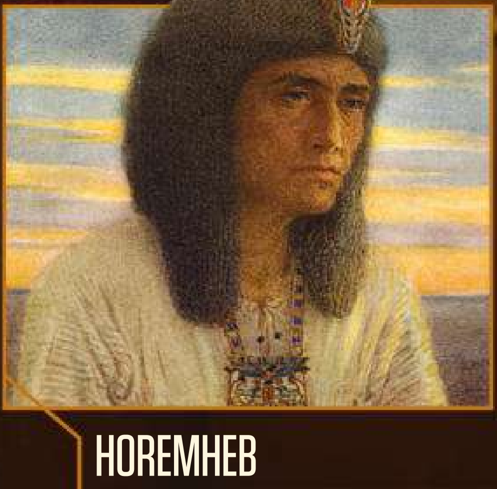
ADVISERS TO THE BOY KING

Key figures who worked behind the scenes



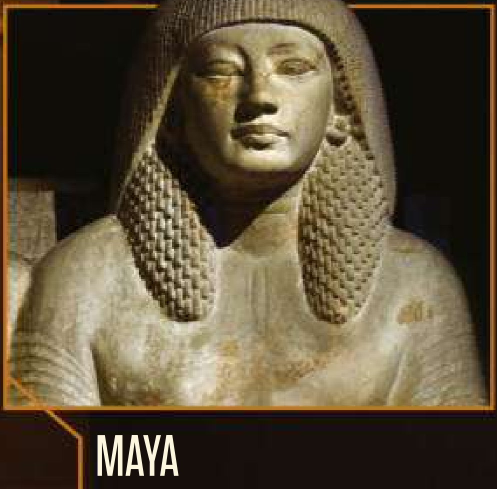
AYE

Ay (sometimes spelt Ay) was the immediate successor to Tutankhamun and had been one of the three men who acted as the young king's chief advisors. He had risen as a political figure under Akhenaten, but is thought to have been one of the chief architects of the transition back to traditional Egyptian culture and religious practices under Tutankhamun.



HOREMHEB

This celebrated military figure became pharaoh after the death of Ay, with whom he had worked in advising Tutankhamun. He had been a commander in the Egyptian military, leading campaigns on the young king's behalf. As pharaoh, he continued the moves away from the worship of Aten and back to Amun, the king of the Egyptian gods at that time.



MAYA

Serving the last three pharaohs of the 18th dynasty as treasurer, Maya was one of the most influential men of his era. The role meant he was in charge of domestic affairs, which given the upheaval around religious reforms and undoing the work of Akhenaten, must have been a tremendous undertaking. Maya is believed to have served Ay, but he died during the reign of Horemheb.

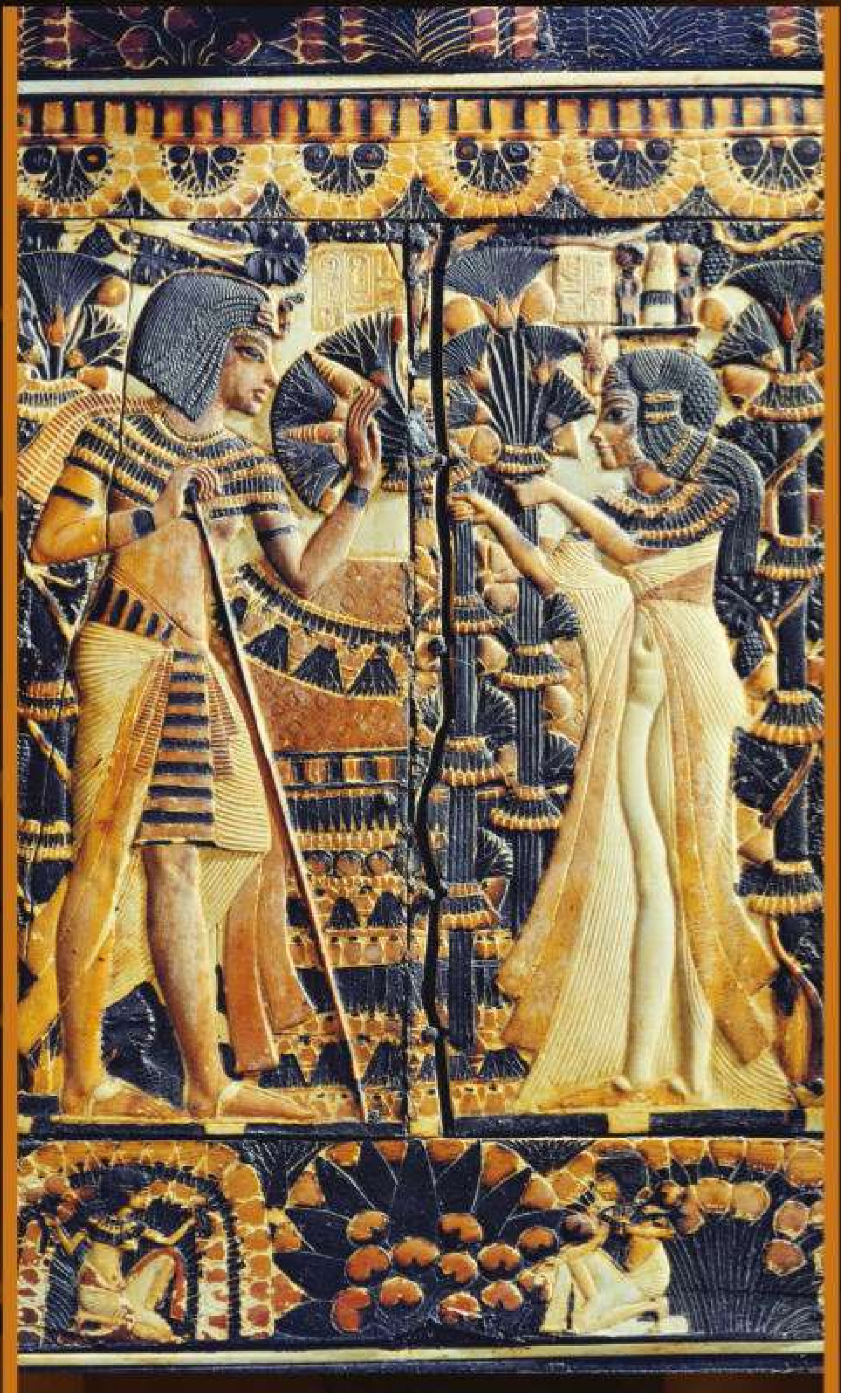
It isn't clear how they died, but during this time plague was running rampant around the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. Amarna was not immune, particularly as people from across the Egyptians' known world visited the city. Bubonic plague even afflicted the royal artisans who cut and decorated Amarna's elite tombs, the disease spread by fleas in their homes.

With Akhenaten dead, the throne seems to have passed to Queen Nefertiti, ruling as King Neferneferuaten. Her reign became a time of transition. Perhaps under pressure from more traditionally minded nobles, she allowed the old gods to regain their positions. The Aten remained their equal, however, and the court continued to operate from Amarna. All around Tutankhamun, a different Egypt re-emerged – a place of deep traditions that had existed for thousands of years. He was now expected to worship gods that had been dismissed in Akhenaten's day. Abandoned rituals reappeared. Prayers unspoken for nearly 20 years were uttered again. It must have been a confusing and stressful time – even more so, when, after only three years as king, Neferneferuaten died. At just ten years old, then, the crown fell to Tutankhamun. During his coronation ceremony, the royal *ka*, or spirit of kingship, entered his body and transformed him from a prince into a pharaoh.

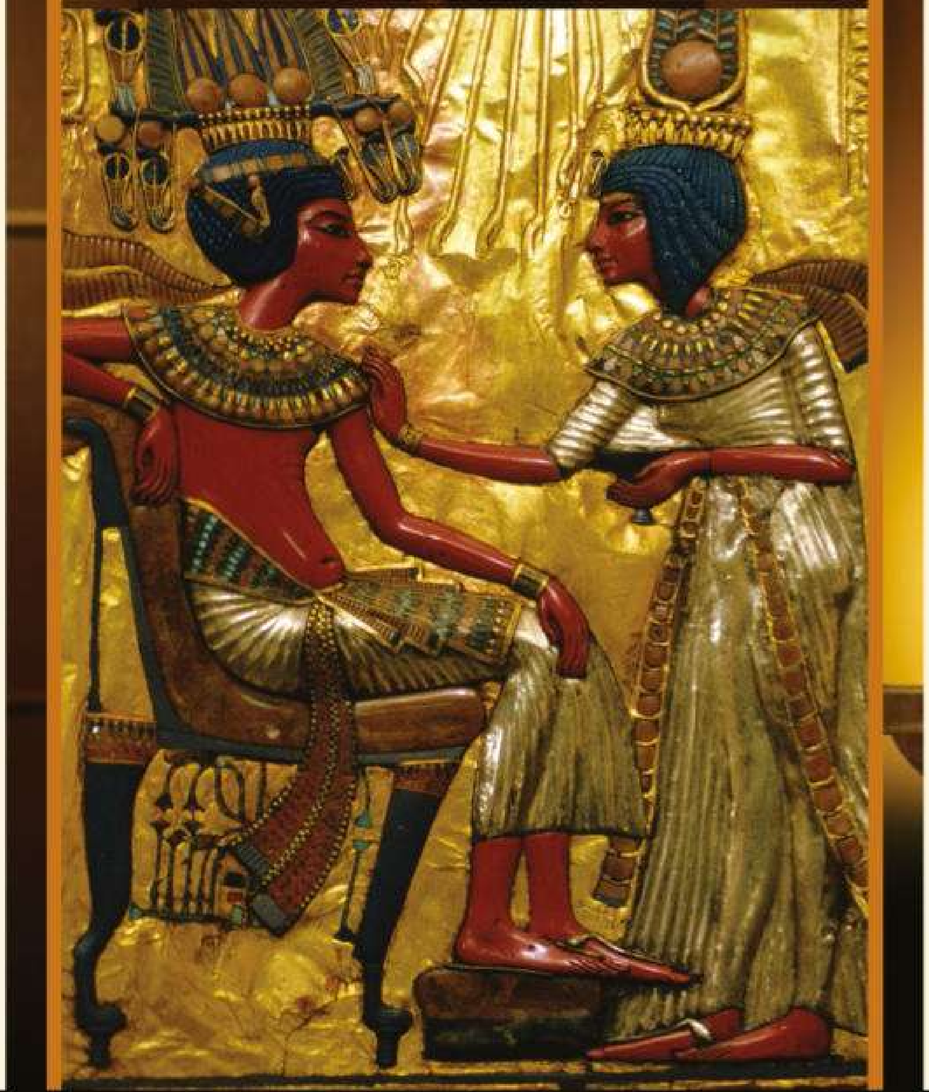
> "All around Tutankhamun, a different Egypt re-emerged – a place of deep traditions that had existed for thousands of years"

THE COURT

As king, Tutankhamun was thrust into a world of politics and power that he had only ever watched from the sidelines. Each day, sitting on his throne, raised high on a dais, he presided over a meeting with his highest courtiers. For these occasions, Tutankhamun held a child-size crook and flail, symbols of his divine office, and wore the false beard of kings, wrapped with wire around his ears. A yellow and blue striped nemes headdress sat on his head. His feet, shod in sandals, perched on a footrest decorated with pictures of Egypt's enemies. From this high vantage point,he watched the vizier and other courtiers enter the audience hall and pay their respects. They updated him on the condition of Egypt and together discussed the important matters of the day. It's impossible to know how much interest the young king had in what they said, but tradition dictated that he be present at such meetings – any deviation from correct order, or *maat* to the Egyptians, brought about chaos – and over recent years the country had experienced more than enough of that. Usually, when a prince became king at a young age, the dowager queen managed affairs. This had happened when King Ahmose I came to the throne as a child and Queen Ahhotep I oversaw Egypt; and later, when Queen – later King – Hatshepsut ruled during King Tuthmosis III's youth. But with Queen Tiye and Queen Nefertiti dead – and seemingly Tutankhamun's mother too – there was no senior family member to guide him. Those closest to Tutankhamun, those in a position to influence his thinking, were his wife Ankhesenamun; his tutors, perhaps still including Sennedjem; and the highest court nobles, many still serving from the time of his father. First among these courtiers was Horemheb – a man called Paatenemheb under Akhenaten. The leader of Egypt's armies, he now gained the title of king's deputy, which gave him the power to oversee every government department – this included the palace administration and, by extension, control over Tutankhamun's daily life. Next, there was Aye, whose sister had earlier married King Amenhotep III, bringing them into the royal family's circle. He acted as a close royal advisor and accompanied the king in his daily duties. Finally, there was the chief treasurer Maya, who managed the kingdom's assets. These three men were the major influences on Tutankhamun from his first days on the throne.



ABOVE A painted ivory plaque from the tomb of Tutankhamun, showing the young king using his cane



BELOW Some detail from the back of Tutankhamun's thrown, showing the king with his queen

THE ROYAL FAMILY

By the time of his coronation, Tutankhamun had married one of his half-sisters – a daughter of Nefertiti and Akhenaten, called Ankhesenamun, who was probably around a year older than him. As queen of Egypt, she represented the female side of kingship, and joined Tutankhamun during ceremonies, audiences and rituals. Various objects show the royal couple together. On the side of a small golden shrine, they hunt birds in the marshes – Ankhesenamun

All images © Alamy

gives the young king an arrow to shoot at his unsuspecting prey. In another scene, her enthroned husband pours water on her hands, purifying them. One of Tutankhamun's board games was also inscribed with the royal couple's names. It has drawers to store the gaming pieces, so it's possible that they played it together when travelling. The royal couple faced personal tragedies too. Over the course of their marriage, they twice tried to have children, but both pregnancies ended in loss. Their stillborn daughters were mummified and eventually buried in Tutankhamun's tomb.

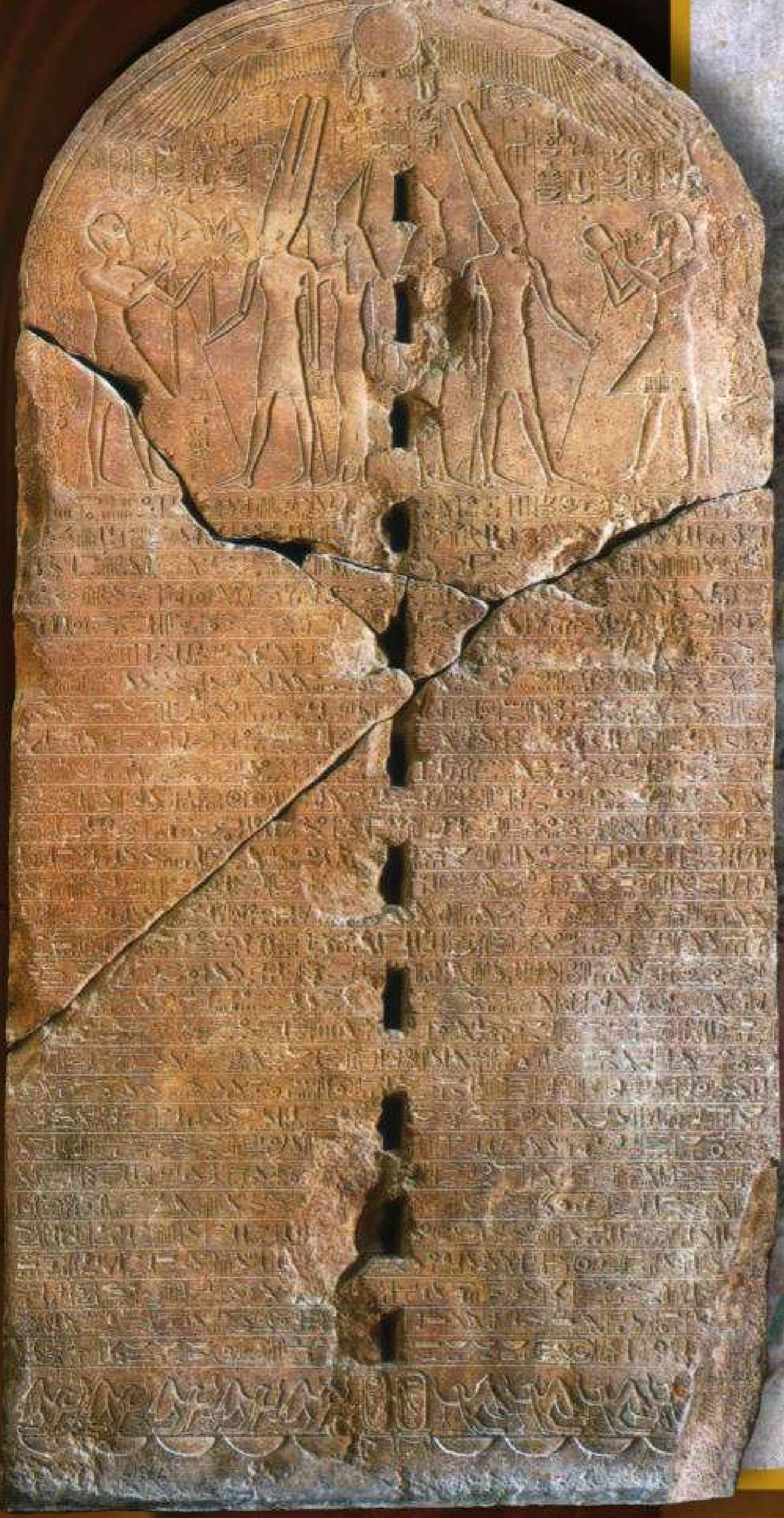
A few years into his reign, Tutankhamun decided to bring the bodies of his family from Amarna to the Valley of the Kings in Luxor for reburial. Without a reason to exist, Amarna would soon be reclaimed by the desert sands. He commanded that his grandmother, Queen Tiye, be interred with her husband, King Amenhotep III, though the gilded wooden frame that had surrounded her sarcophagus at Amarna was kept in a small, undecorated tomb, now known as KV 55 (KV standing for King's Valley). Tiye and Tutankhamun's lives only briefly overlapped, but she must have been important to him, for he kept a lock of her hair in a small coffin among his own possessions. KV 55 also became the final resting place of Akhenaten – if indeed, the skeleton within is actually him. He was placed in a repurposed coffin, originally made for Queen Kiya, surrounded by other objects from Amarna. Tutankhamun had abandoned his father's teachings, and now represented Egypt's return to tradition, but he must have still felt responsible for ensuring his heretic father's afterlife well-being.

> "Tutankhamun presented himself as a son of the king of the gods"

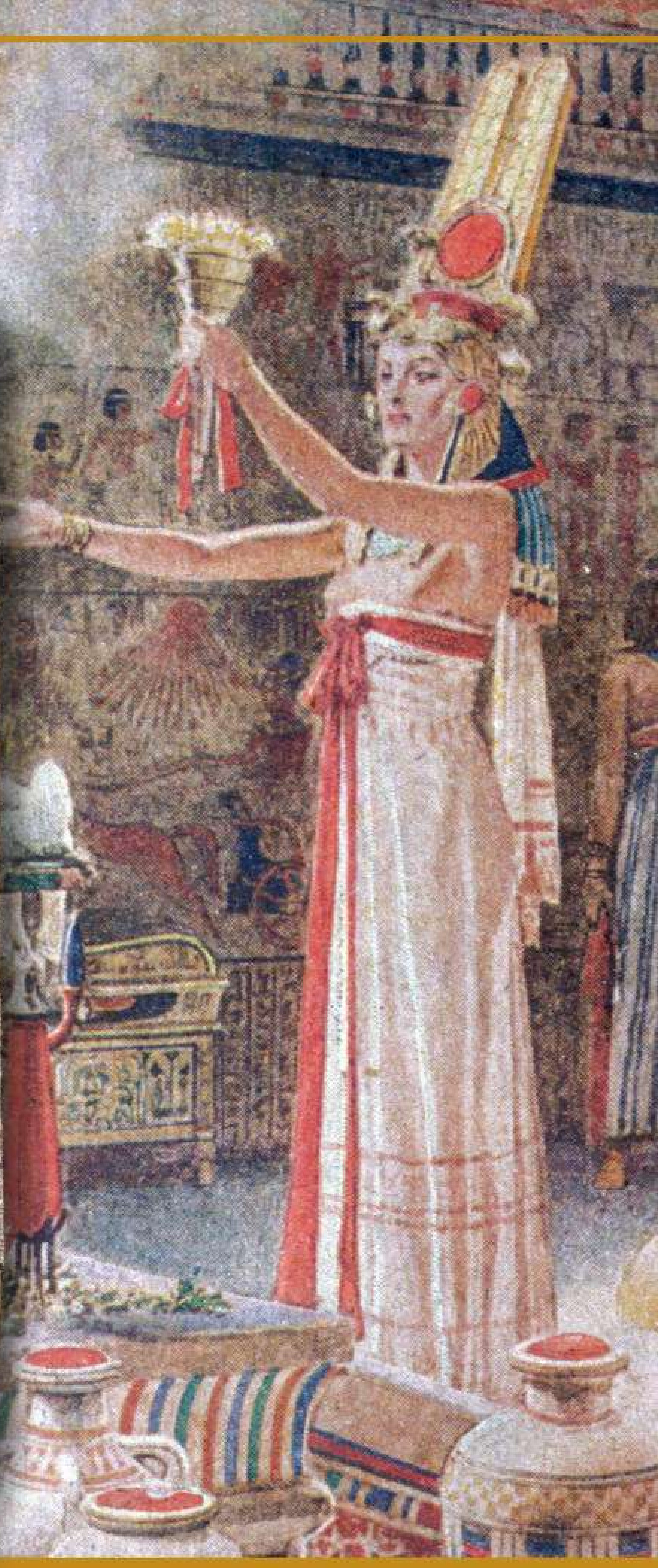
THE RESTORATION

Although the royal court had abandoned Amarna for the traditional royal city of Memphis, Akhenaten's legacy was everywhere. The temples of the gods remained neglected across Egypt. Smashed statues lay where they'd fallen. Divine names had been scratched away from monuments. As king, this was a problem that Tutankhamun had to address – either by his own volition or, more likely given his young age and education in the Amarna ways, at the suggestion of his courtiers. As a starting point, Tutankhamun commissioned an inscription that described Egypt's woeful state. Not only were the temples in ruin, the inscription explained, but the gods had abandoned the country and Egypt's armies failed when sent abroad to fight. Tutankhamun had fixed all of this, it continued. The young king had rebuilt the temples and pleased the gods. Egypt had returned to a state of order. In reality, none of this had happened yet, but in ancient Egypt, the written word had magical power – writing something down made it a reality. Craftsmen dutifully carved the text into stone stelae and erected them at temples across the country, including at the Temple of Amun at Karnak – the home of Akhenaten's most hated god. Like other royal stelae, its content was probably read aloud to crowds on festival occasions, spreading the word of Tutankhamun's good deeds.

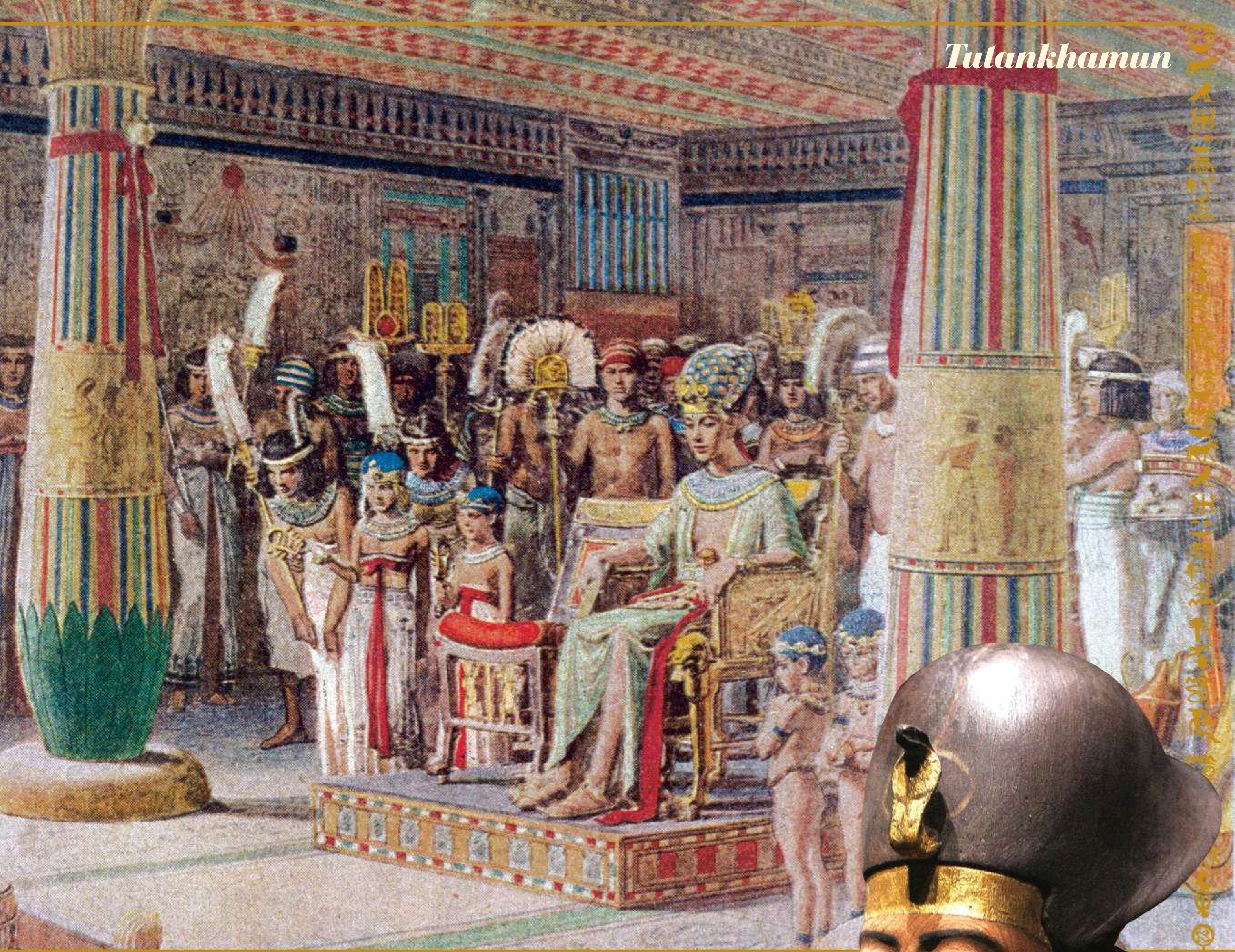
With this statement of intent 'published', craftsmen mobilised across Egypt to restore what had been broken or destroyed. Workshops produced carvings of gods, each bearing the face of Tutankhamun. Early in his reign, these reflected his young age, while those made later showed him as a teenager. This was not unusual. It was traditional for divine statues produced under a king to bear his idealised portrait and for this to change over the years. What wasn't normal was the sheer number of statues that had to be carved – Akhenaten's vandals had been thorough. Statues acted as bodies for the gods' divine forces to inhabit when receiving offerings, for which, in return, they ensured Egypt's success. By destroying these vessels, Akhenaten had cut off one of their ways to interact with humanity. Egypt's most important divine statues were kept in



ABOVE Tutankhamun's Restoration Stele describes how the king restored the temples and brought Egypt back to a state of order after a time when the gods had abandoned the country



ABOVE-RIGHT A depiction of Queen Nefertiti performing a ceremony

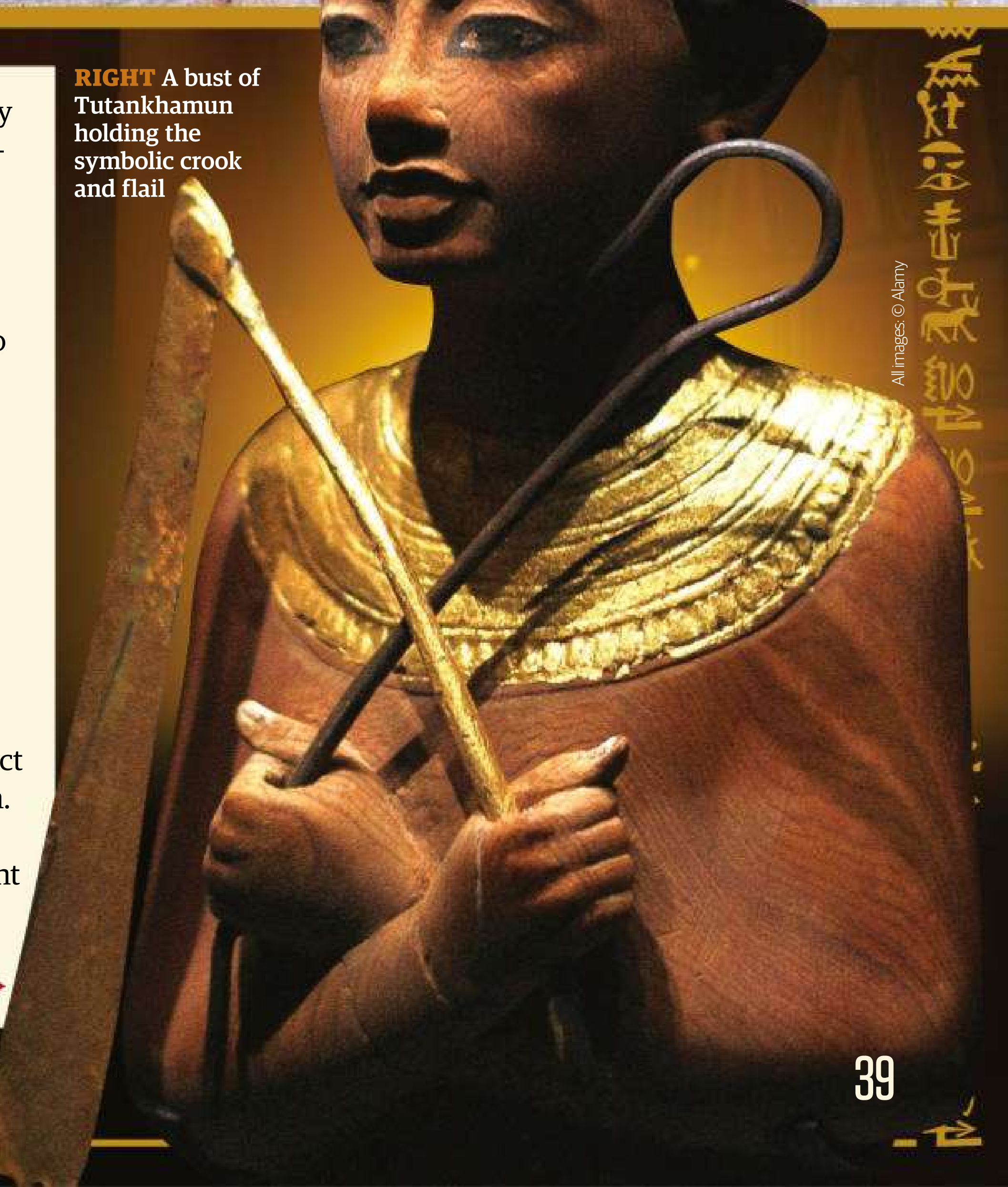


the temple sanctuaries but other, larger statues populated the temple enclosures too. These also bore Tutankhamun's face, including one of the god Khonsu, the young son of Amun, at Karnak. With this statue, Tutankhamun presented himself as a son of the king of the gods, and showed that he had fully turned his back on his father's teachings.

RITUALS AND FESTIVALS

One of Tutankhamun's most important duties was leading religious festivals. As pharaoh – a role that made him intermediary between people and the gods – this was not something that he could avoid because of his youth. Being a semi-divine being came with obligations. Although high priests usually made divine offerings in the temples, certain royal festivals required the king's presence. Consequently, pharaohs travelled frequently, moving with the court and their servants to palaces or temporary lodgings across the country. On their journeys, they would take foldable furniture with them – Tutankhamun owned both a folding bed and a folding head rest.

One of Egypt's most important annual events was the Opet Festival, in which the king travelled from Karnak Temple to Luxor Temple, accompanied by the gods Amun, Mut and Khonsu, to re-energise his royal *ka* – the spirit of kingship. Luxor Temple held a special significance to Tutankhamun. The construction of its Colonnade Hall had begun under his grandfather, King Amenhotep III, but it had been abandoned by Akhenaten. Tutankhamun – or, at least, one of his advisors – decided that it would be a powerful symbol of continuity and respect for the gods to finish the hall's decoration. So, as the years passed, Luxor Temple's priests watched craftsmen carve and paint scenes of the Opet Festival, eternalising Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun's presence at the event. ▶



RIGHT A bust of Tutankhamun holding the symbolic crook and flail

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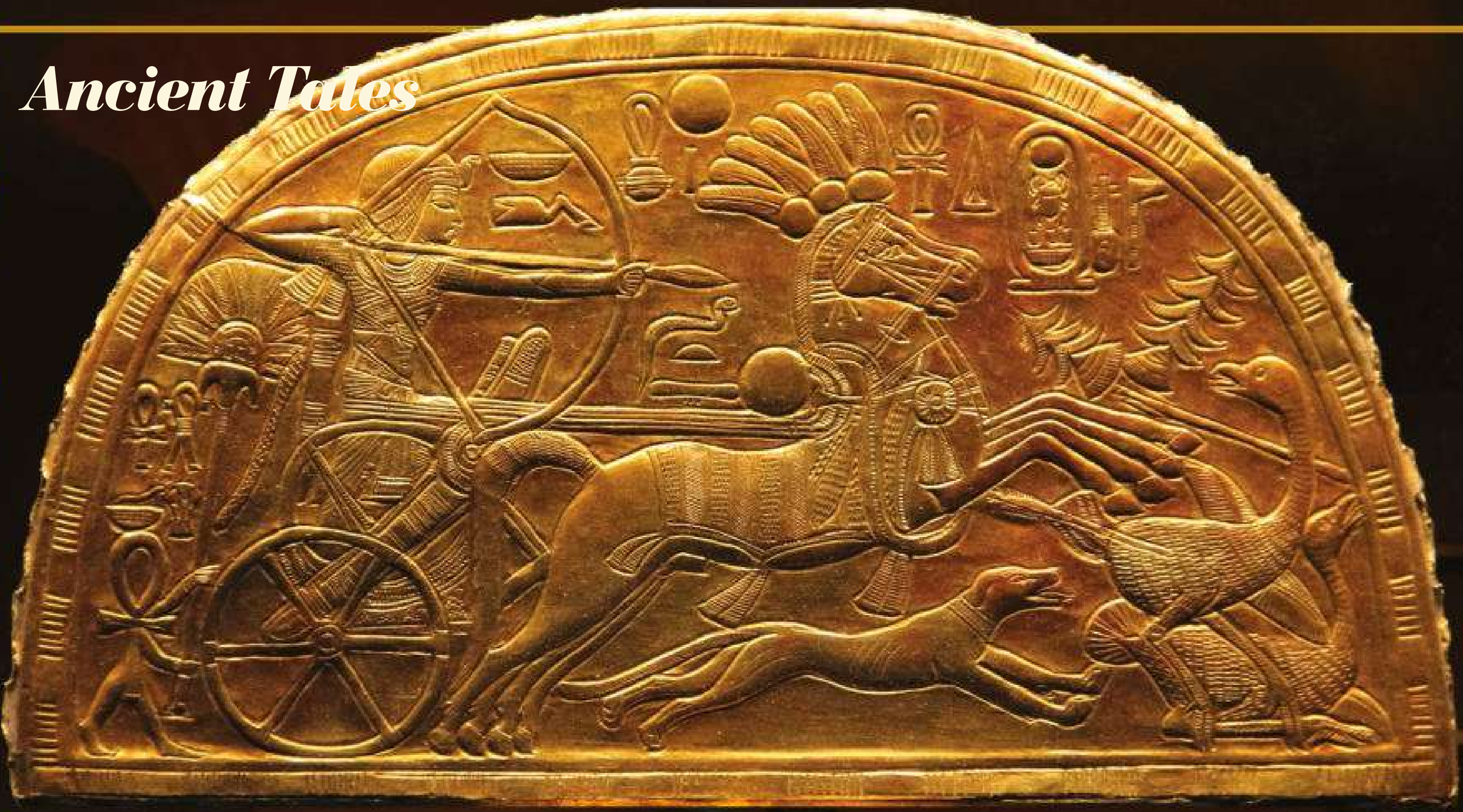


ABOVE Hunting was a popular hobby for Egypt's pharaohs, and Tutankhamun was no different. On this fan, he is shown hunting ostriches from his chariot, firing arrows at his prey

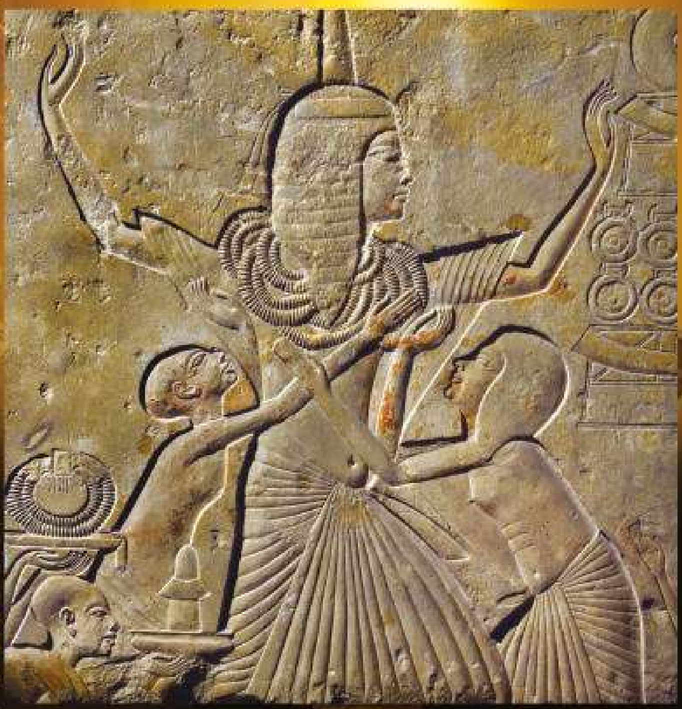
> "Within a few years, General Horemheb became pharaoh, usurped Tutankhamun's monuments, and took responsibility for his achievements"

Despite a calendar already filled with festivals, extra ritual tasks could arise that required Tutankhamun's attention. During his later teenage years, the sacred apis bull of Memphis died, forcing the priests to seek out a successor. According to tradition, this bull was an incarnation of the god Ptah, the creator god of Memphis, and could be identified by specific markings such as the shape of an eagle on its back and a white diamond on its head. Once craftsmen had constructed the bull's tomb at the sacred necropolis of Saqqara, and the bull itself had been mummified, Tutankhamun presided over the funerary ceremonies. He wore a form of religious scarf, made from faience beads, inscribed for the gods Ptah and Sokar, and left offerings for the bull inside the tomb.

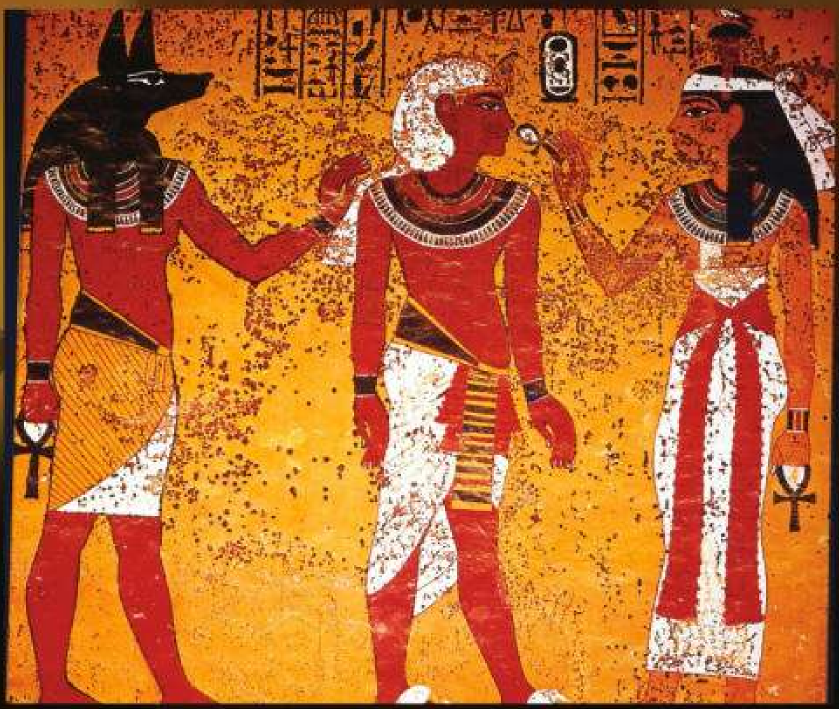
EMPIRE AND WARFARE

Over the centuries before Tutankhamun's reign, Egypt's pharaohs had expanded their territory south along the Nile into Nubia and created a new government position to manage the region – the Viceroy of Kush. One of Tutankhamun's duties was to install an official named Huy into this role. The young king presided over the ceremony, watching from his throne as Huy received the seal of office from an official. The newly appointed viceroy then left the palace audience hall to begin his journey south. Years later, Huy returned to the royal court. He was accompanied by Nubian leaders and prisoners, perhaps caught during a rebellion, and servants carrying tribute, including live animals, gold and shields.

The Egyptians also held territory to their north-east, encompassing much of the Levant up to Syria. Under Akhenaten, Egypt had lost control of Qadesh, one of its key cities in this region, to the



BELOW-LEFT General Horemheb was Egypt's most powerful courtier under Tutankhamun. Here, he receives gifts from the king as reward for his excellent work



BELOW This mural from Tutankhamun's burial chamber shows him with the gods Anubis (left) and Hathor (right)

EGYPT'S YOUNG PHARAOHS

Tutankhamun was far from the only child to rule Egypt

CLEOPATRA VII THEA PHILOPATOR

Became pharaoh aged: 18
Reign: 51 - 30 BCE

The famous queen of Egypt, who would prove to be the last pharaoh of her kingdom, took the throne alongside her brother after the death of their father, Ptolemy XII. She famously hitched her fortunes to Julius Caesar and then Mark Antony, but saw her power fall as each was killed during internal Roman power struggles.

AMENHOTEP III

Became pharaoh aged: 12
Reign: c.1391 - 1353 BCE

Tutankhamun's paternal grandfather had also ascended the Egyptian throne at a very young age and shared similar interests with his future heir. We know he enjoyed hunting, for instance, because he issued commemorative scarabs celebrating his feats. Amenhotep III is remembered as a diplomatic and peaceful ruler.

PTOLEMY XIII THEOS PHILOPATOR

Became pharaoh aged: 11
Reign: 51 - 47 BCE

One of two brothers of Cleopatra who shared the Egyptian throne, Ptolemy XIII became king alongside his sister after the death of their father. He initially backed Pompey the Great against Caesar during the Alexandrian War and would come to oppose him again after Caesar's victory, only to be killed.

TUTANKHAMUN

Became pharaoh aged: 10
Reign: c.1332 - 1323 BCE

The young king only served for around nine years on the throne of Egypt and seems to have dealt with a number of health issues during that time. He contracted malaria, suffered from a degenerative bone condition, had a clubfoot necessitating the use of a cane, had a cleft palate and a weakened immune system.

PEPI II NEFERKARE

Became pharaoh aged: 6
Reign: c. 2278 - c. 2184

Nearly 1,000 years before Tutankhamun became pharaoh, Pepi II ascended at an even younger age and may have ruled for as long as 94 years. Possibly as a result of the exceptional length of his reign, his kingdom was weakened by internal strife over the years, leaving Egypt vulnerable in the immediate aftermath.

Hittites, an expanding civilisation from Turkey. This gave the Hittites greater control over lucrative trade networks – a major strategic loss for Egypt. In his later years as king, Tutankhamun decided to rectify this situation. He despatched General Horemheb to lead Egypt's armies to Qadesh, battles were fought and, at some point, Egyptian soldiers marched with severed hands on their spears. One prisoner was held in a cage and brought back to Egypt by boat. Ultimately though, Qadesh remained in Hittite hands. The campaign must have been a failure. Nonetheless, Horemheb returned to a grand reception at court and paraded his prisoners, each tied to the other, before Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun. The king himself then took some of these prisoners to the Temple of Amun at Karnak, to offer them – and perhaps even execute a few – before the resurgent god.

TUTANKHAMUN'S FINAL DAYS

Over the course of his life, Tutankhamun contracted different strains of malaria, which must have left him intermittently feeling weak and ill, and his club foot made it difficult to walk. On one occasion when visiting a temple, he pulled a reed rush from the ground, perhaps to help steady himself for his religious duties. His servants kept this improvised stick and ensured that it was put in his tomb. None of these problems stopped the young king from living an active life. Like other pharaohs, Tutankhamun enjoyed hunting on his chariot – racing along after his prey, shooting arrows from his bow, while another man steered the horses. The wheels of two of his chariots became so worn that parts of them had to be replaced. One popular hunting ground was Giza, where he had a small palace built beside the Great Sphinx, and he hunted ostriches near the city of Heliopolis too.

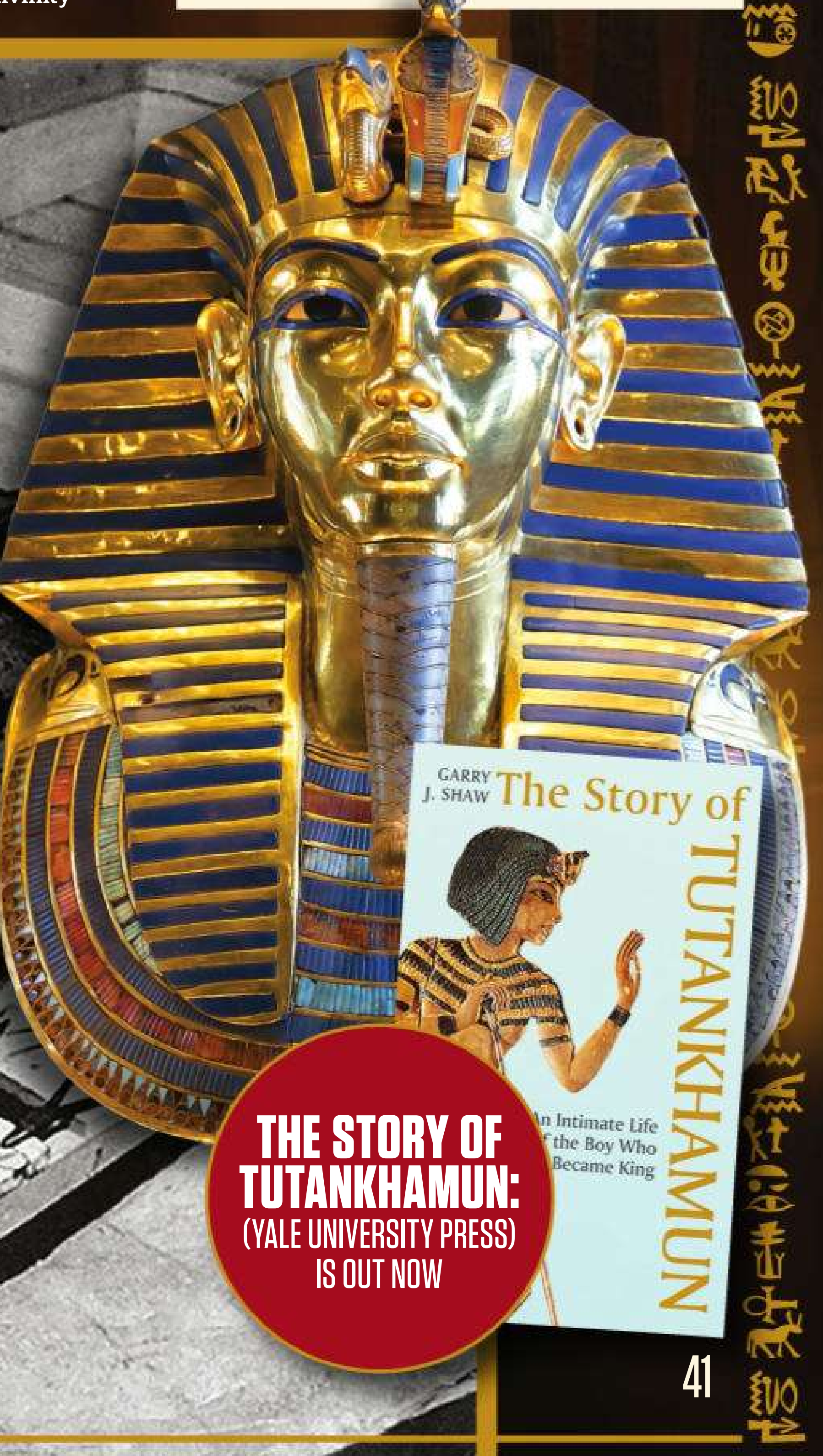
Tutankhamun was perhaps out hunting on his chariot when he suffered a severe accident. He broke his leg, leaving an open wound pouring with blood. There was little that the palace doctors could do – the severity of the injury made it impossible for him to recover. Within days, Tutankhamun was dead. He was only 19. The king now began his second life, joining the sun god on his eternal journey through the day and night skies, battling against the forces of chaos to protect the cosmos. It was an important duty, the fate of all pharaohs, but the living didn't care. Within a few years, General Horemheb became pharaoh, usurped Tutankhamun's monuments, and took responsibility for his achievements. Later kings omitted Tutankhamun from their lists of royal predecessors. The Amarna era – and anyone associated with it – was to be obliterated from memory.

By chance, though, Tutankhamun's tomb remained safe. A year after the royal funeral a rare storm had sent flash-flood debris hurtling down the Valley of the Kings. When the water subsided, Tutankhamun's tomb lay hidden beneath a metre of hard rubble. It remained that way for over 3,000 years, until 4 November 1922, when its first steps were rediscovered. Three weeks later, on 26 November, archaeologist Howard Carter held a candle through a hole forced in the tomb's entranceway and saw "wonderful things". From that moment, Tutankhamun lived again.

All images: © Alamy

BELOW The rediscovery of Tutakhamun's tomb brought his name back to life

BELOW-INSET Tutankhamun's death mask covered the head of his mummy. With the gold skin of a god, the king wears the striped nemes headdress and a false beard associated with divinity



THE STORY OF TUTANKHAMUN:
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KINGS & QUEENS

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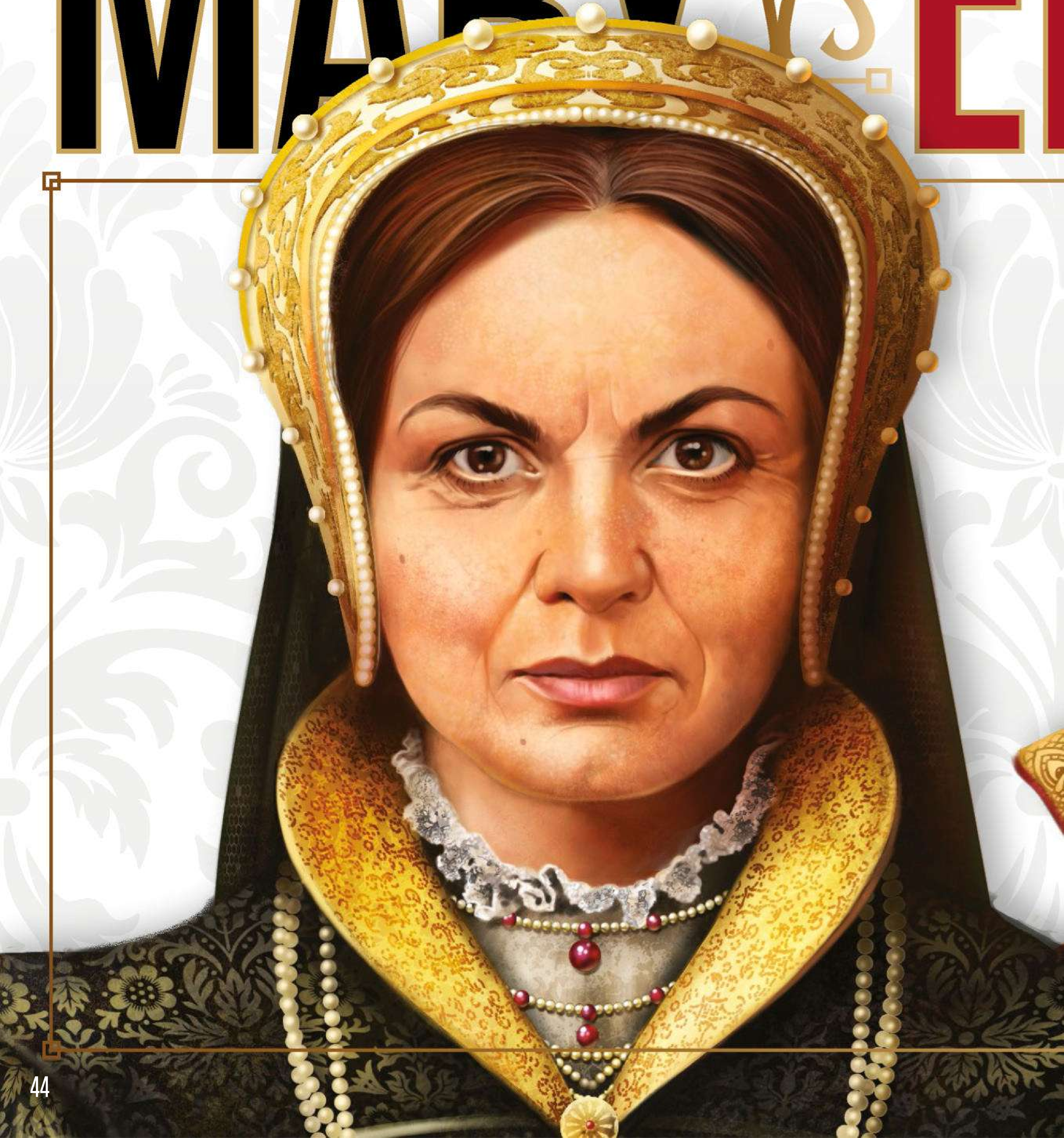

LIZABETH

How the battle between the queens reshaped the English monarchy

Written by Tracy Borman

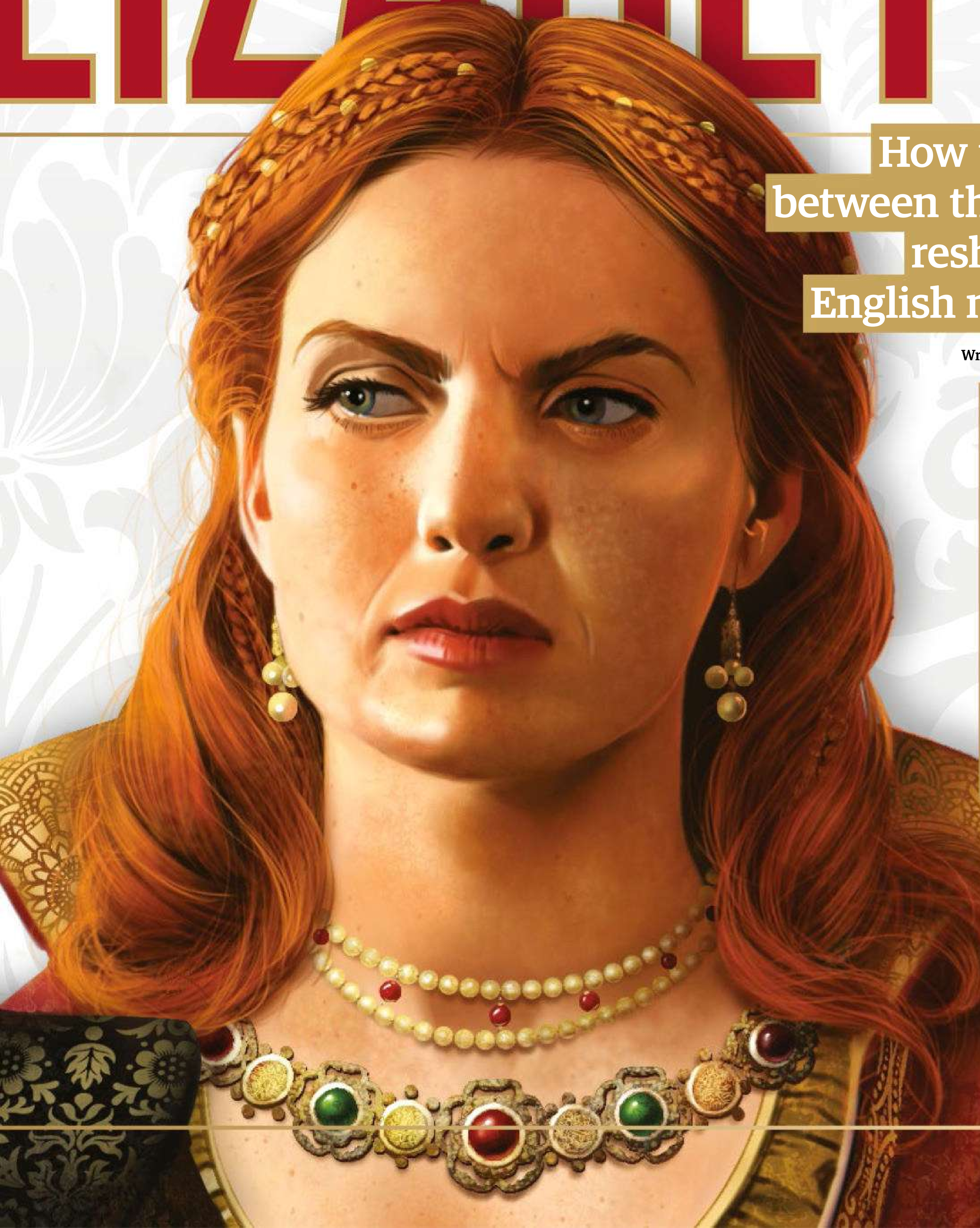

Illustration by Joe Cummings

EXPERT BIO

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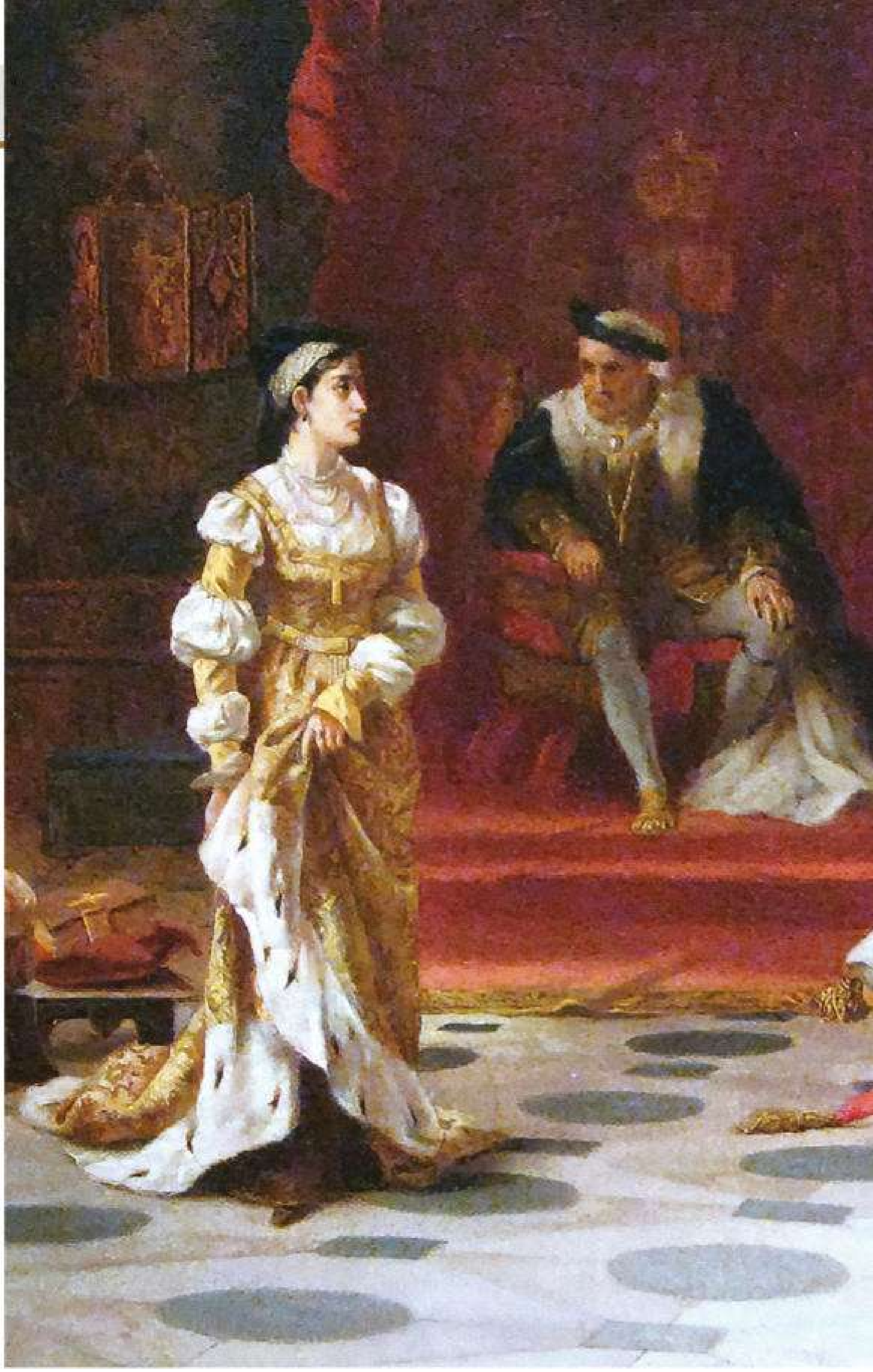
DR TRACY BORMAN

Tracy Borman is a Tudor historian, author and broadcaster. She wrote about Mary and Elizabeth's relationship in her book *Elizabeth's Women: The Hidden Story of the Virgin Queen*. Her latest book is *Crown & Sceptre: 1,000 Years of Kings and Queens*.



MARY I TIMELINE

Key events in the life of Henry VIII's eldest child

18 February 1516

Mary born

Daughter of King Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, Princess Mary is born at the Palace of Placentia in Greenwich, London.

1525

Princess of Wales

Mary is sent to Ludlow to preside over the Council of Wales and the Marches. She is referred to as the Princess of Wales but is never officially granted the title.

25 January 1533

Henry weds Anne Boleyn

Having secretly married in November of the previous year, an official ceremony is held and later, in May, Henry's marriage to Catherine is annulled by Archbishop Cranmer.

7 September 1533

Princess Elizabeth born

Henry VIII has a second daughter, much to his continued frustration. Elizabeth is brought up at Hatfield and her mother Anne is killed before she turns three years old.

November 1534

Acts of Supremacy

Officially breaking from the Vatican, the king has Cardinal Wolsey and Parliament draw up a new act that proclaims the monarch to be "the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England".

12 October 1537

Prince Edward born

Now married to his third wife, Jane Seymour, Henry finally has a son in Edward, although Seymour dies 12 days later.

14 July 1543

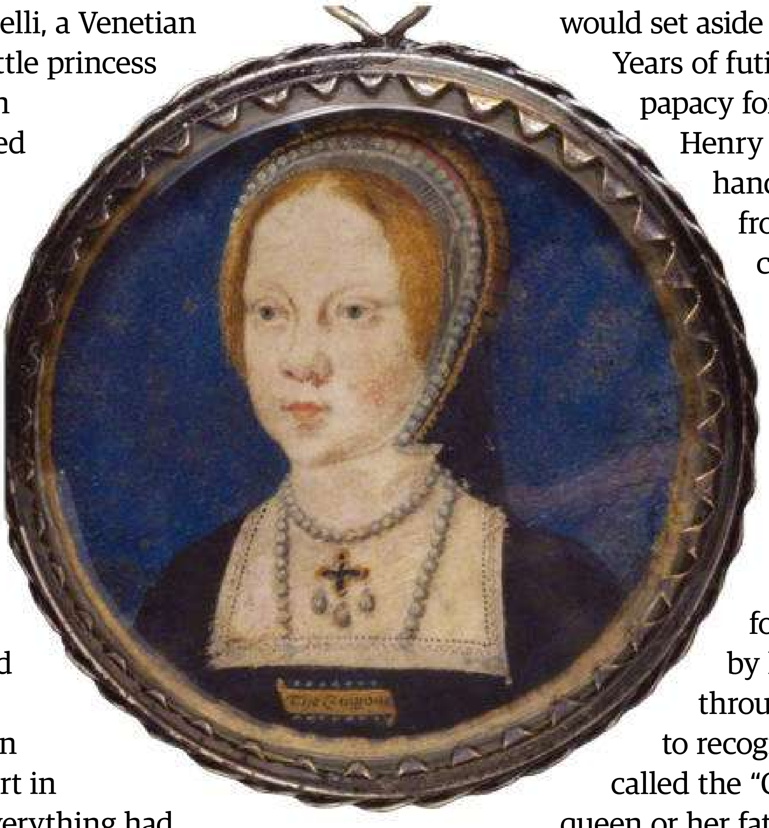
Act of Succession

After the aging king marries Catherine Parr, his sixth and final wife, he relents to the idea of restoring his two daughters to the line of succession behind his son Edward.

Mary I and her sister Elizabeth had little in common except their father: Henry VIII. Mary was a staunch Catholic, Elizabeth a devout Protestant. Mary was deeply conventional in her views of women and took a husband as soon as she ascended the throne, Elizabeth was determined never to marry and became the Virgin Queen of legend. Mary's reign was brief and brutal, Elizabeth's has been celebrated as one of the longest and most successful of any British monarch. They may have been opposites but the relationship between the two sisters would have a profound impact on the queenship of both.

At 4am on 18 February 1516, Catherine of Aragon was delivered of a daughter. The child might not have been the son that her husband Henry VIII so craved but she was at least healthy and, given Catherine's experience of childbirth, that was something to be thankful for. A lavish christening was held three days later at the Church of the Observant Friars, attended by the highest-ranking members of the court. The king's infant daughter was named Mary.

Mary enjoyed a pampered upbringing. As the king's cherished only child she was "much beloved by her father," according to the Venetian ambassador. She was fêted at court and proudly shown off to foreign ambassadors, who all praised her appearance and intelligence. Her long red hair was "as beautiful as ever seen on human head." Gasparo Spinelli, a Venetian dignitary, told of how the little princess had danced with the French ambassador, "who considered her very handsome, and admirable by reason of her great and uncommon mental endowments." During her early years, Mary learned the typical courtly accomplishments of playing the lute and virginals, singing, dancing and riding. She also received an excellent education at the hands of Juan Luis Vives, a celebrated humanist scholar.



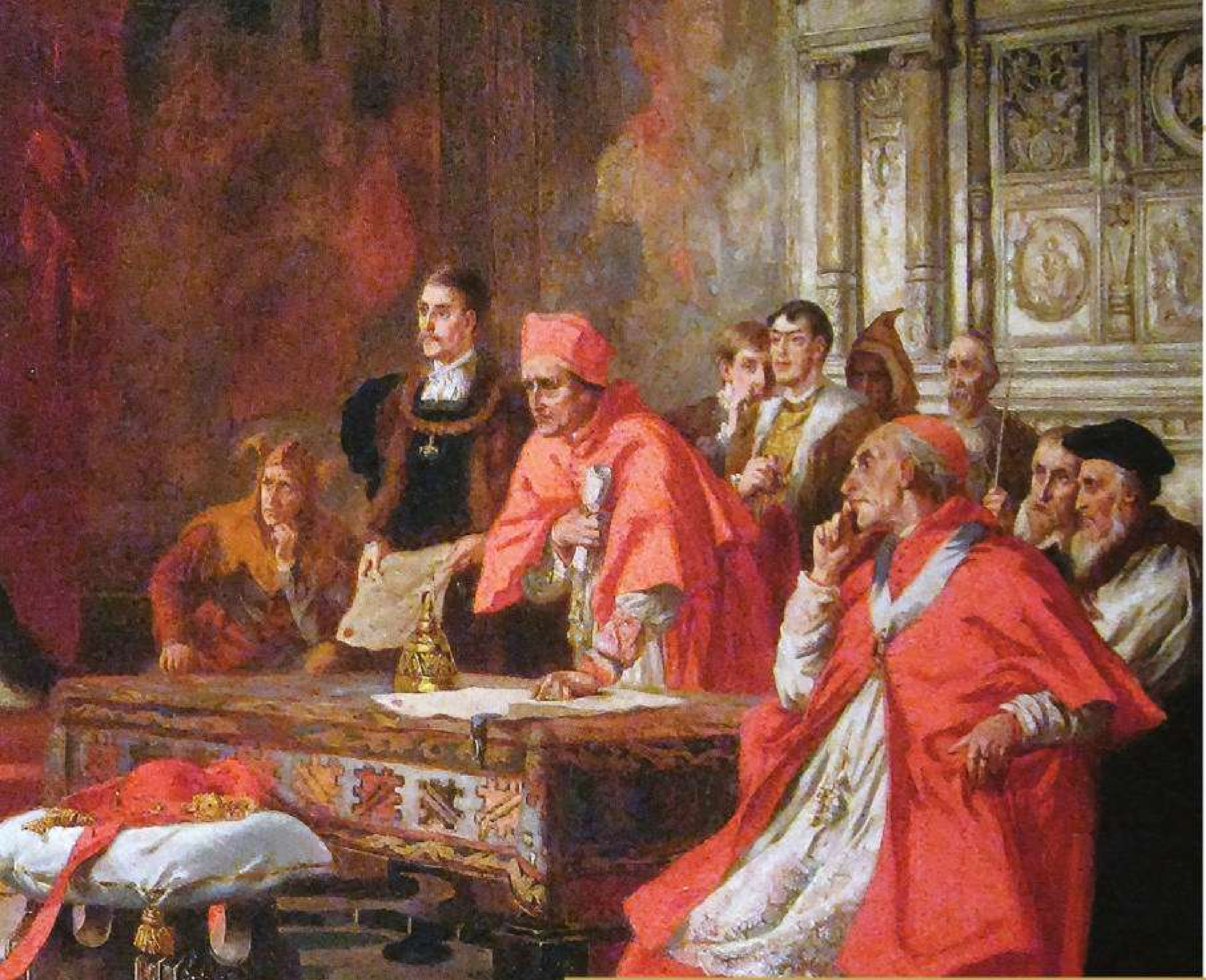
ABOVE A portrait of Mary as a child – she was apparently much loved by her father at the time

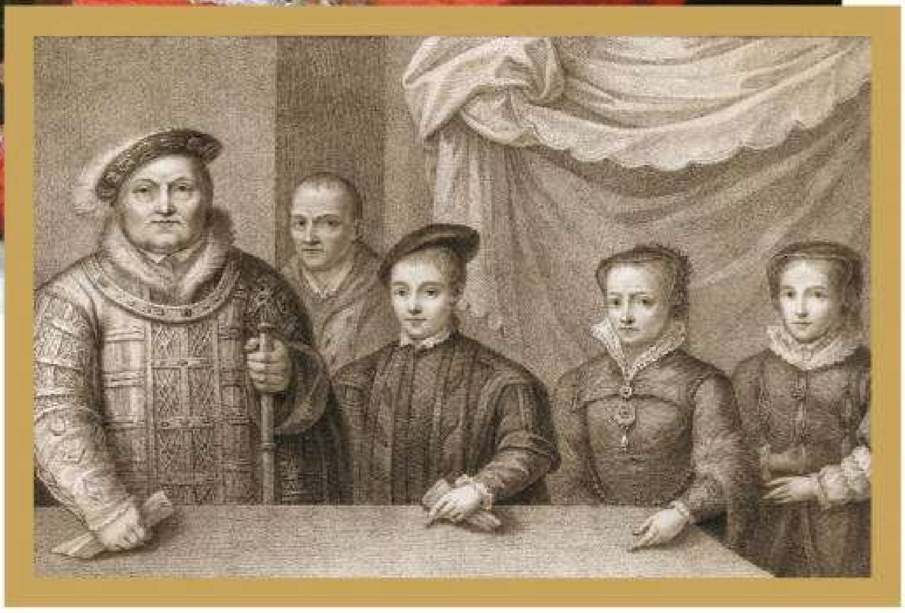
After a two-year sojourn in Wales Mary returned to court in 1527, aged 11. But by then everything had changed. For the past year her father had been obsessed with one of her mother's ladies-in-waiting. Anne Boleyn was a fiery young woman who'd arrived from the French court in 1522. Having seen how quickly the English king's mistresses were discarded (her own sister included), Anne refused to sleep with him, which drove Henry wild with frustrated lust. Soon, he began to think the unthinkable: that he would set aside Catherine and marry Anne.

Years of futile negotiations with the papacy for annulment followed until Henry took matters into his own hands and separated England from Rome, creating a new church over which he was supreme head. Turbulence and destruction followed for years afterwards, tearing the country apart and pitting traditional Catholics against those following the new faith.

Mary fell firmly in the former camp. She had stood by her mother Catherine throughout this time, refusing to recognise Anne (whom she called the "Concubine") as the rightful queen or her father as head of the new church. Neither did she accept her half-sister Elizabeth – born to Anne and Henry in September 1533 – as the rightful heir.

Having been declared illegitimate after the annulment of her parents' marriage,





> "Mary suffered the humiliation of being forced to join her infant sister's household"

Mary suffered the humiliation of being forced to join her infant sister's household, where she remained for several years. It is to her credit that after Anne's dramatic fall from grace in 1536 Mary took her young sister under her wing and showed her the love and affection of a protective older sister. United in their illegitimacy (Anne's marriage to Henry had been annulled just prior to her execution), the two daughters were now on an equal footing for the first time and this improved their relationship considerably. They remained close throughout Elizabeth's childhood, although religion became a source of tension: Mary was staunchly Catholic while Elizabeth had been raised in the new reformed faith. This tension would become ever more pronounced in the years ahead.

After their father's death in 1547, his 'precious jewel', Edward, became king at the age of just nine. Staunchly Protestant, he favoured his younger half-sister Elizabeth, while Mary, who refused to give up her Catholic beliefs, found herself out in the cold. Upon his deathbed just six years later, Edward changed the succession in favour of his cousin, Lady Jane Grey, in order to prevent his Catholic half-sister from taking the throne. But the people did not take kindly to a usurper and Mary soon ousted the 'Nine Days' Queen', as Jane became known. Mary was proclaimed queen on 19 July 1553 amid wild rejoicing.

But simmering beneath the public celebrations was widespread unease at the prospect of a queen regnant. "To promote a woman to bear rule… is repugnant to nature… the subversion of good order, of all equity and justice," railed the Protestant preacher John Knox. Women, he argued, were "weak, frail, impatient, feeble and foolish." Lady Jane Grey aside, Mary Tudor was England's first queen regnant for almost 400 years. The last incumbent, Empress Matilda, had held onto power for

▶

TOP The annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon officially made Mary illegitimate, although she would be brought back into the line of succession

ABOVE Henry VIII depicted with his three legitimate children and their jester Will Sommers, in the background

28 January 1547

Henry VIII dies

With his health ailing for some time, Henry VIII dies but leaves little by way of succession planning for his government or the new king, Edward VI, who is just nine years old.

19 July 1553

Mary proclaimed queen

Following the untimely death of her half-brother Edward VI, and a short-lived claim by Lady Jane Grey, Mary is proclaimed the new monarch.

1 October 1553

Mary is crowned

After riding into London in August with her half-sister Elizabeth and 800 supporting nobles, Mary is crowned at Westminster Abbey.

18 March 1554

Elizabeth imprisoned

Following a rebel plot organised by Sir Thomas Wyatt to put Elizabeth on the throne, Mary imprisons her sister in the Tower of London, but no evidence is found against her.

25 July 1554

Marriage to Prince Philip

Mary marries Prince Philip, the son of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Such a marriage potentially blocks her Protestant half-sister's position as heir.

Sep 1554

The false pregnancy

Around September 1554 Mary's menstruation cycle stops – she then begins gaining weight and having bouts of nausea. However, it turns out not to be the case, leaving Mary distraught.

February 1555

Burning Protestants

The restoration of Roman Catholicism in England leads to the return of the Heresy Acts. With religious doctrine on her side, Mary starts executing Protestant nobles.

March 1557

England drawn into war

Philip draws England into war with France following the abdication of his father Charles V. The war is a disaster for England and leads to the loss of Calais in 1558.

17 November 1558

The queen is dead

In 1558 Mary names Elizabeth as her lawful successor. Mary falls ill during an influenza pandemic that is gripping London and dies not long after.

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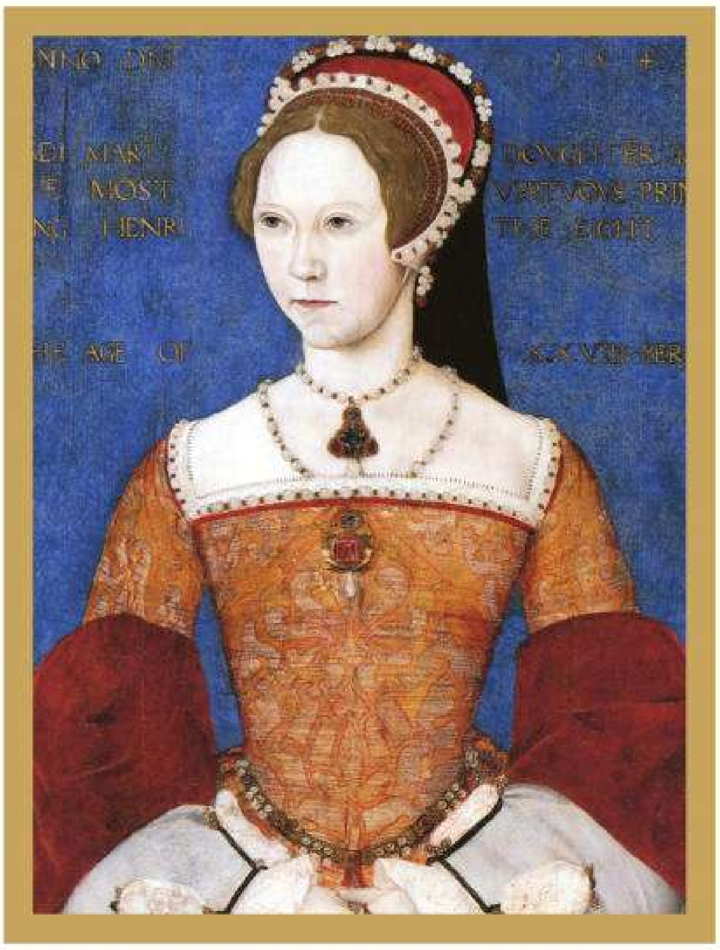
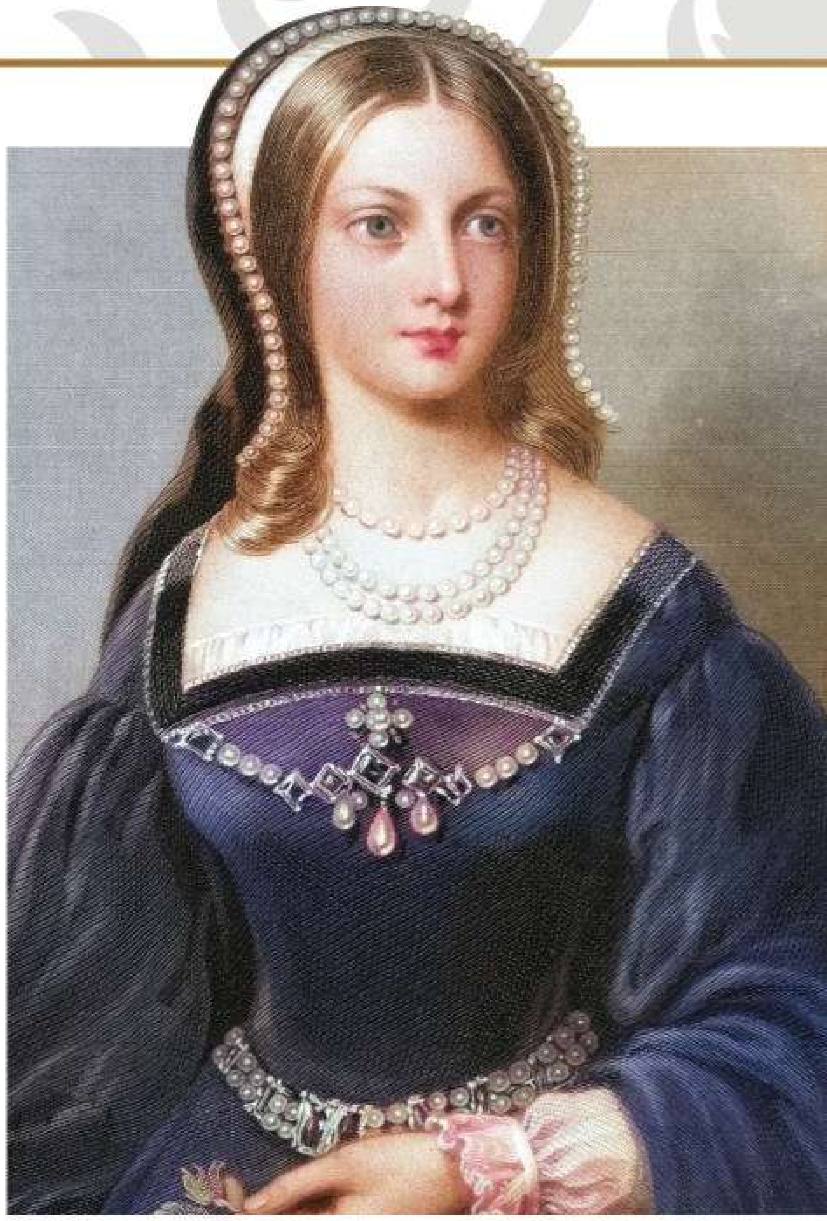
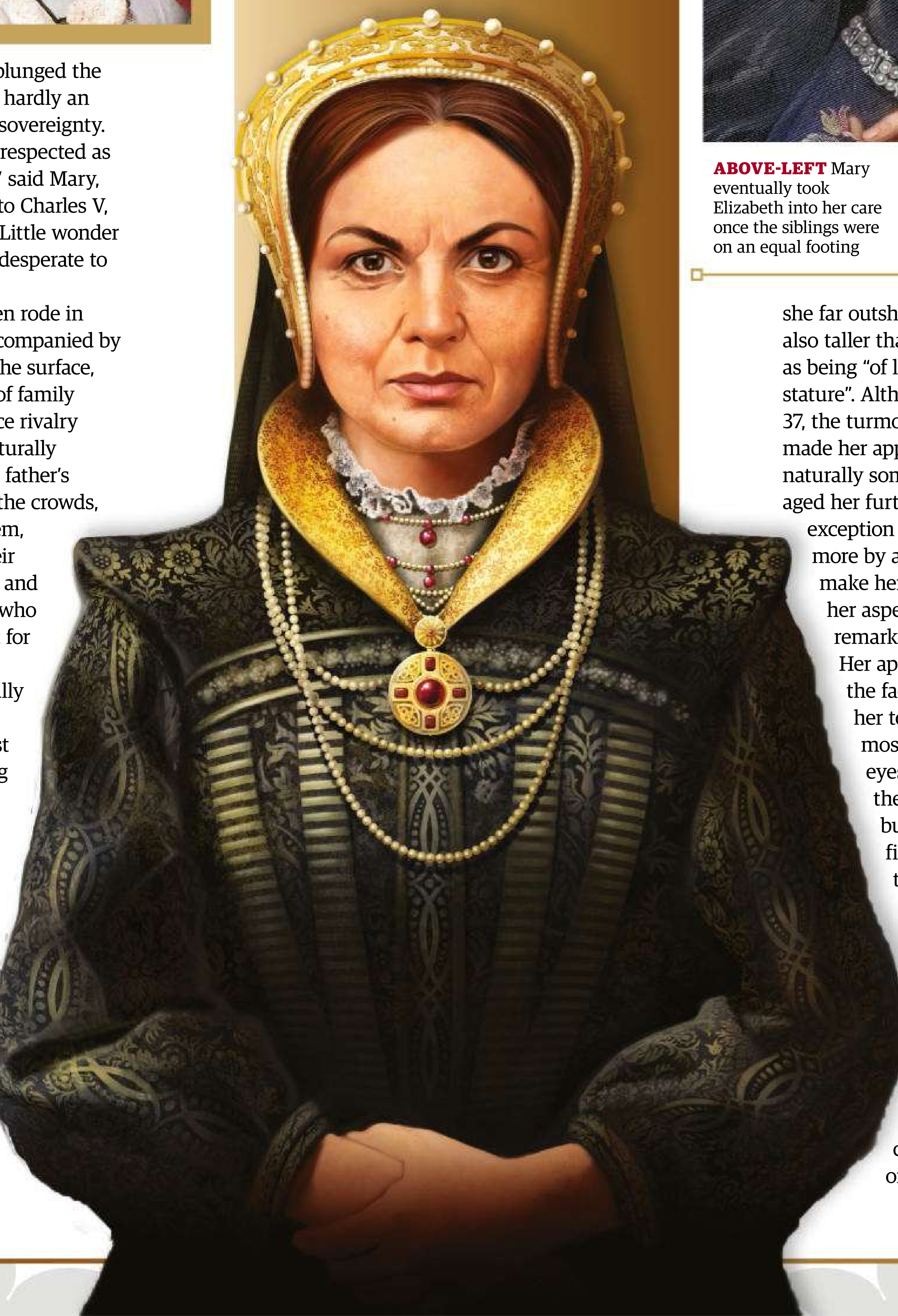




ABOVE-LEFT Mary eventually took Elizabeth into her care once the siblings were on an equal footing

ABOVE Lady Jane Grey was briefly declared queen, but Mary successfully argued for her right to succeed Edward VI and was much more popular at the time

> "AS QUEEN, MARY MADE IT CLEAR THAT SHE INTENDED TO RETURN ENGLAND TO THE PAPAL FOLD"

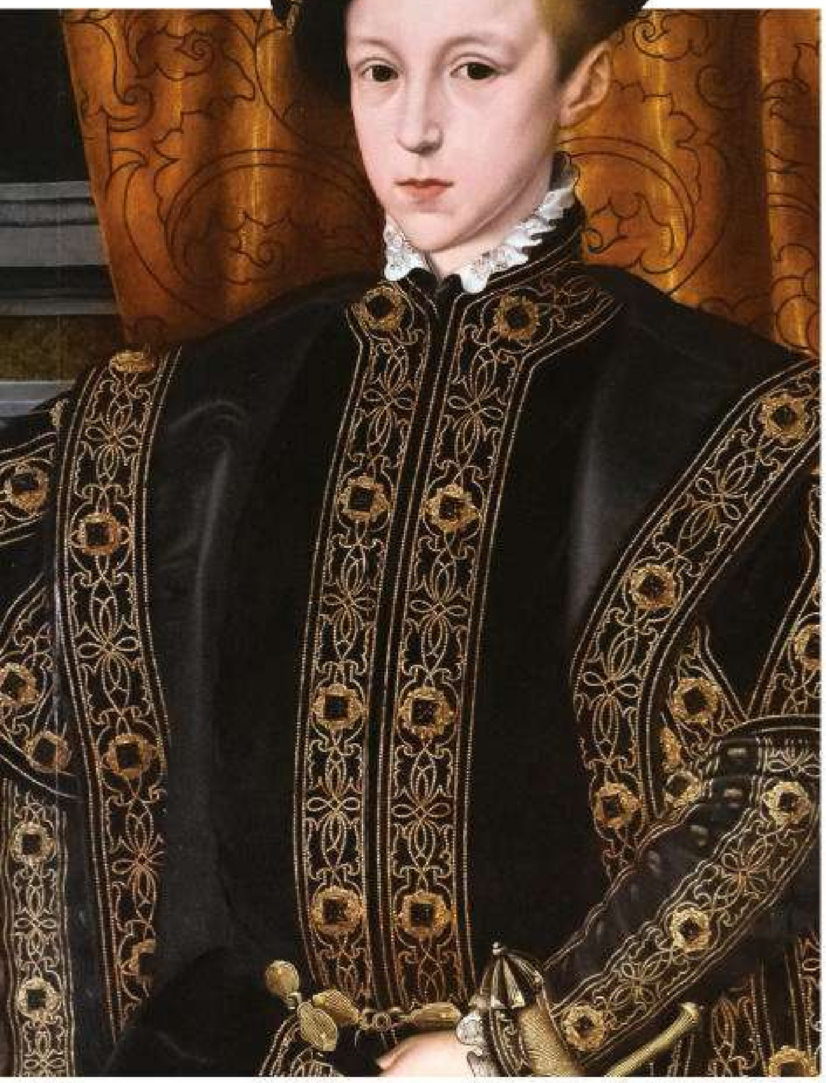


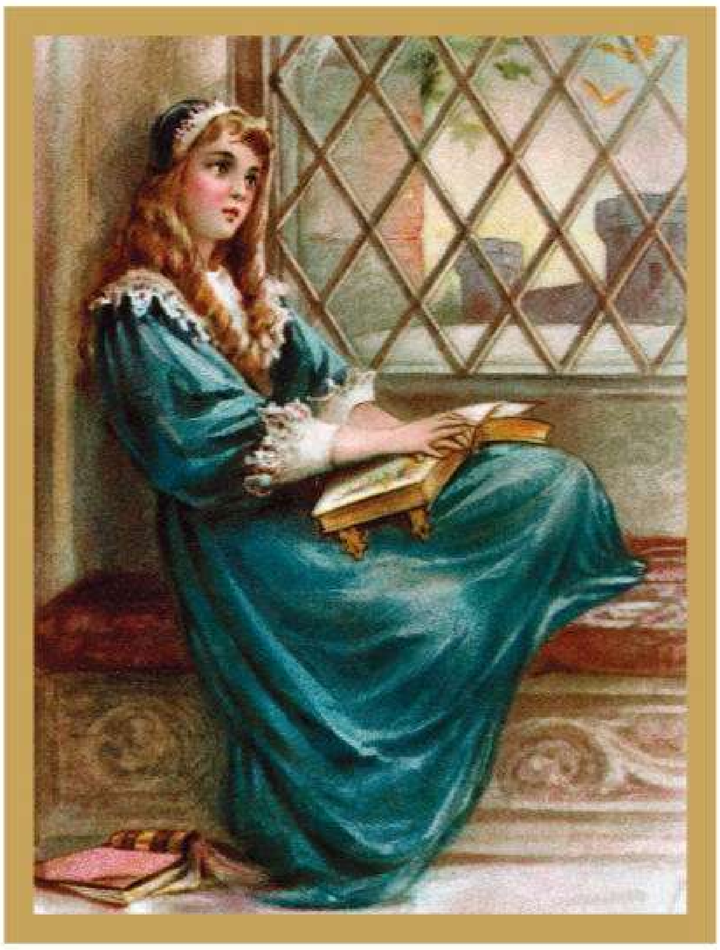
only a few months and had plunged the country into civil war. It was hardly an inspiring example of female sovereignty. "A woman is never feared or respected as a man is, whatever her rank," said Mary, Queen Dowager of Hungary to Charles V, when resigning her regency. Little wonder that Henry VIII had been so desperate to sire a legitimate male heir.

On 3 August, the new queen rode in triumph through London, accompanied by her half-sister Elizabeth. On the surface, it was a dazzling expression of family unity. But behind it lay a fierce rivalry between the two siblings. Naturally introspective and lacking her father's ability to charm and enthral the crowds, Mary progressed through them, responding awkwardly to their cheers and appearing distant and aloof. By contrast, Elizabeth, who had inherited her father's gift for public relations, attracted the most attention as she gracefully inclined her head and waved her hand, drawing the loudest cheers. "Her Grace, by holding up her hands and merry countenance to such as stood far off, and most tender and gentle language to those that stood nigh… did declare herself thankfully to receive her people's good will," remarked one bystander.

Elizabeth's popularity was enhanced by her appearance. With her "comely" face, long red hair, "fine eyes" and youthful exuberance, she far outshone her sister. Elizabeth was also taller than Mary, who was described as being "of low rather than of middling stature". Although the new queen was only 37, the turmoil and sadness of her youth made her appear much older and her naturally sombre, tight-lipped expression aged her further. "At present, with the exception of some wrinkles, caused more by anxieties than by age, which make her appear some years older, her aspect, for the rest, is very grave," remarked the Venetian ambassador. Her appearance was not helped by the fact that she had lost nearly all her teeth in her 20s. Among her most noticeable features were her eyes, which were so piercing that they "inspire, not only respect, but fear, in those on whom she fixes them." In fact, Mary's tendency to stare intently at people was due more to her severe short-sightedness than an intention to intimidate, but her gruff, deep voice, which was "rough and loud, almost like a man's" did not make her any more appealing.

Although she loved fine clothes and paid a great deal of attention to her wardrobe,

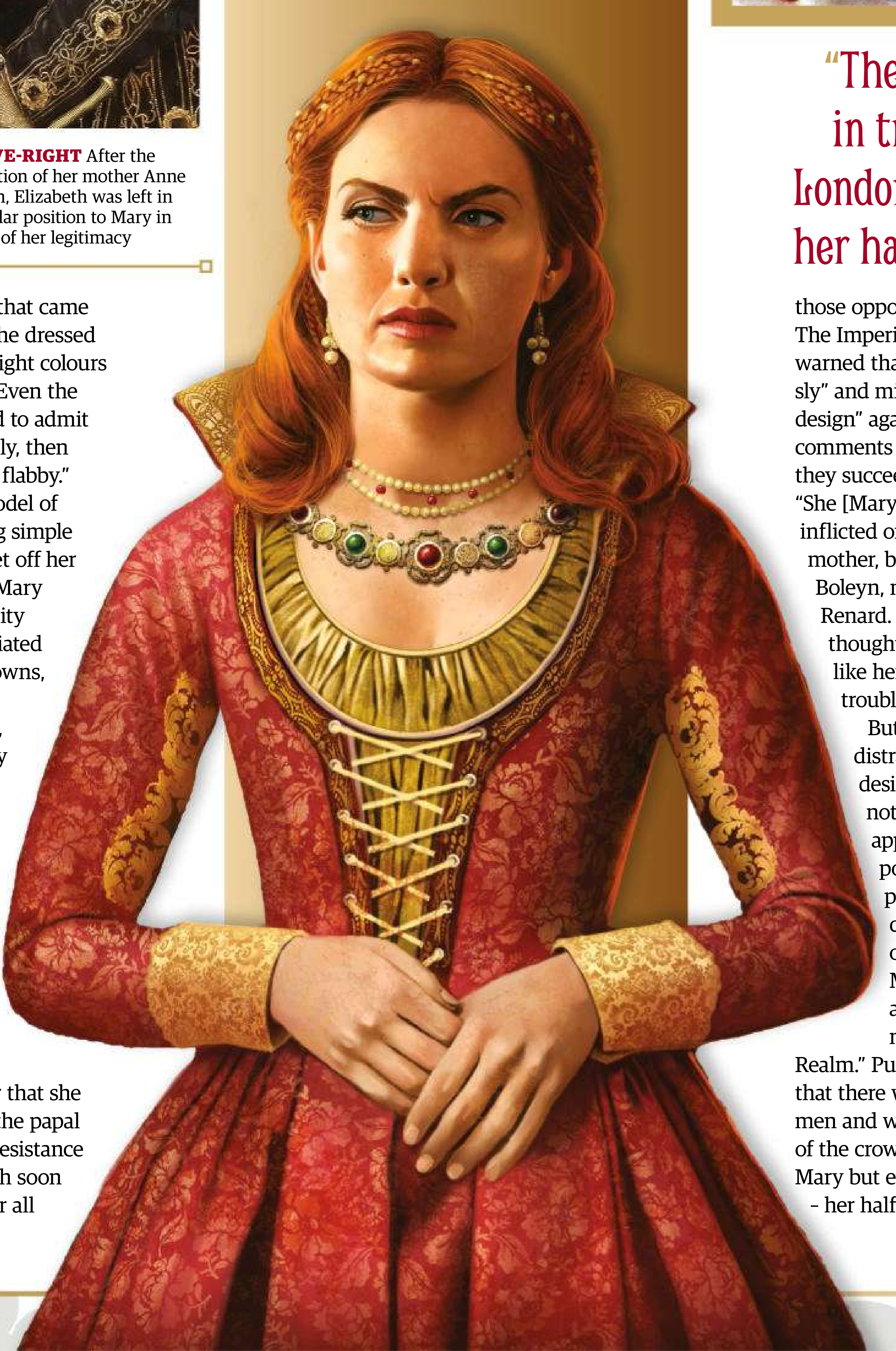




ABOVE King Edward VI favoured his middle sister Elizabeth since they shared their Protestant faith

ABOVE-RIGHT After the execution of her mother Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth was left in a similar position to Mary in terms of her legitimacy

"ELIZABETH SOON BECAME A NATURAL FIGUREHEAD FOR THOSE OPPOSED TO HER HALF-SISTER'S REGIME"



"The new queen rode in triumph through London, accompanied by her half-sister Elizabeth"

Mary lacked the sense of style that came so naturally to her half-sister. She dressed in richly decorated gowns of bright colours that clashed with her red hair. Even the Spanish ambassador was forced to admit that if she dressed more stylishly, then "she would not look so old and flabby." By contrast, Elizabeth was a model of understated elegance, favouring simple gowns of white or green that set off her colouring to perfection. While Mary was embarrassed by her sexuality and preferred to hide her emaciated figure in heavy, high-necked gowns, Elizabeth flaunted hers with a knowingness beyond her years, exuding a sex appeal that many men at court found irresistible.

There were soon other, graver causes for discord between the two sisters. Even though she was a devout Protestant, Elizabeth was shrewd enough to "adapt herself to the will of her Majesty" – and that will was decidedly Roman Catholic. From the beginning of her reign, Mary made it clear that she intended to return England to the papal fold. This sparked widespread resistance among her people and Elizabeth soon became a natural figurehead for all those opposed to her half-sister's regime. The Imperial ambassador, Simon Renard, warned that Elizabeth was "clever and sly" and might "conceive some dangerous design" against the new queen. Such comments may have been slanderous, but they succeeded in reopening old wounds. "She [Mary] still resents the injuries inflicted on Queen Catherine, her lady mother, by the machinations of Anne Boleyn, mother of Elizabeth," noted Renard. Mary confided to him that she thought Elizabeth would grow to be like her mother, "who had caused great trouble in the Kingdom."

But Mary soon had other distractions. Monarchical power was designed for a male ruler and it was not clear whether it could or should apply to a woman. After much political wrangling, in April 1554 parliament passed "An Act for declaring that the Regal power of this realm is in the Queen's Majesty as fully and absolutely as ever it was in any her most noble progenitors kings of this Realm." Put simply, the Act determined that there would be no distinction between men and women with regard to the powers of the crown. This would benefit not just Mary but every subsequent queen regnant – her half-sister Elizabeth included.

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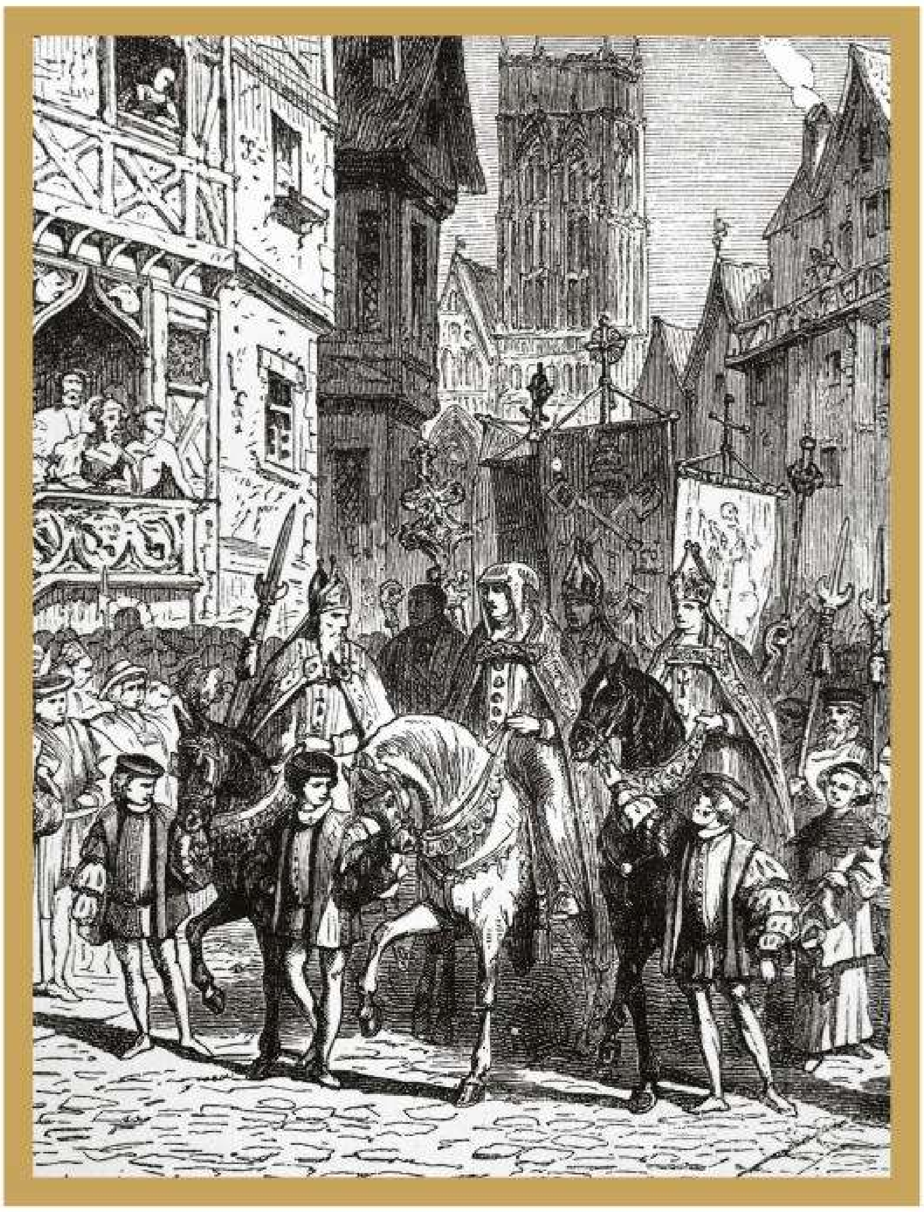


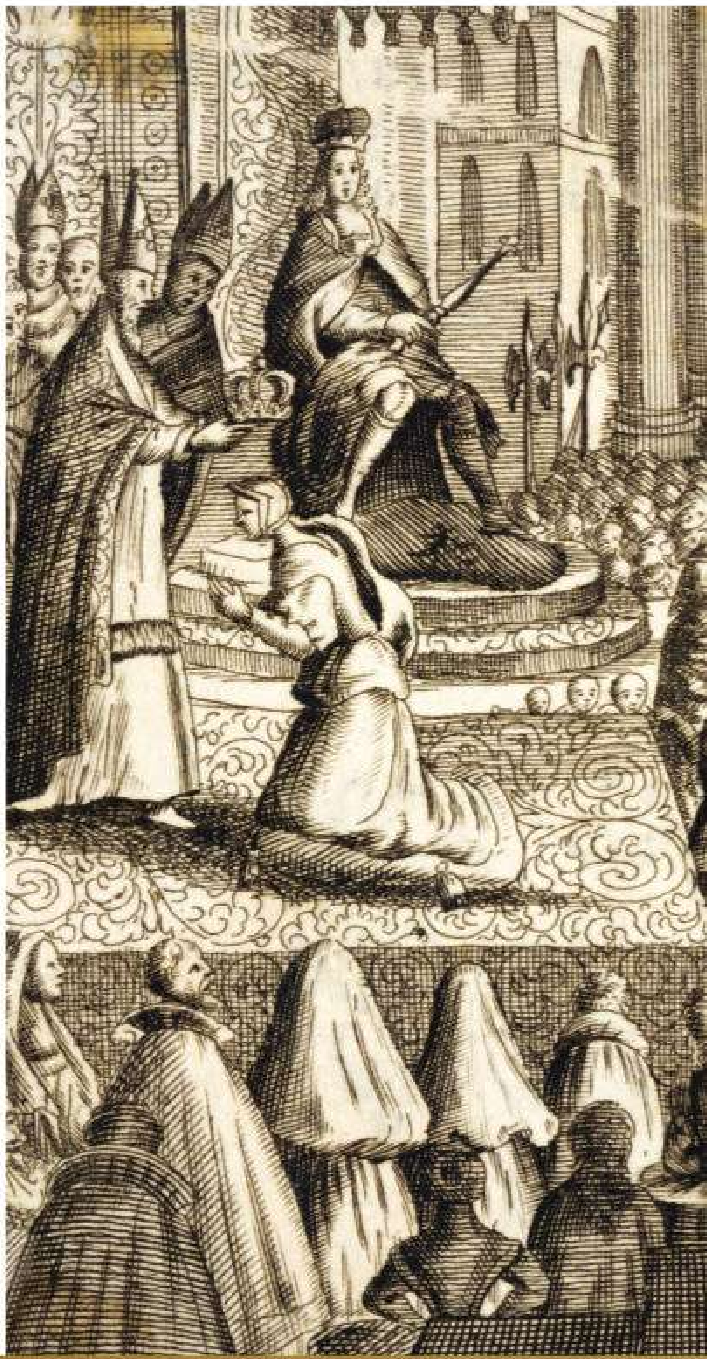
ABOVE Mary riding into London accompanied by the Catholic bishops and 800 nobles to claim her throne

Even though Mary shared the same prejudice against women as her contemporaries, she had what one eyewitness described as "a terrible and obstinate nature" and was determined to assert her authority. This was expressed most forcefully through her unbending resolve to return England to the Roman Catholic fold. While some of her subjects welcomed this, others were fiercely opposed. But Mary was not a woman to compromise and her unflinching pursuit of heretics overshadowed every other aspect of the reign, earning her the sobriquet "Bloody Mary". She mistakenly believed that those of her subjects who refused to conform had been manipulated by a small group of leaders. If these were removed, then her subjects would realise the error of their ways and return to the Catholic fold. The reinstatement of the 14th century heresy laws in 1555 gave Mary carte blanche to hunt down those whom she believed responsible and condemn them to be burnt at the stake. The first victim was the clergyman-preacher John Rogers, who was consigned to the flames in February 1555. Other high-profile reformers soon followed, notably Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley in October that year, and - most shocking of all - in March 1556 Thomas Cranmer, Henry VIII's archbishop of Canterbury and leader of his Reformation.

> "The queen had failed to appreciate the strength of feeling among her xenophobic people"

Eliminating the Protestant leaders had the opposite effect to the one Mary intended. The horrific manner of their deaths excited sympathy even among religious conservatives and strengthened the resolve of the reformists, who were of a greater number than the queen had judged. Undeterred, she expanded her pursuit of heretics. By the summer of 1558 about 290 people, mostly from the lower classes, had been put to death. The ranks of sympathisers had grown with each burning so that by the end of Mary's reign Protestantism had taken a firmer hold than when she had ascended the throne.

Mary's staunch Catholicism also inspired her choice of husband. Because of her late mother, she felt a natural affinity for Spain and as a child had been betrothed to its king, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Although Charles had subsequently broken their betrothal, his 26-year-old son Philip was still unmarried. As a Catholic prince from her mother's homeland, he was ideal in Mary's eyes. Her council did not agree and feared that England would become a mere satellite of the Spanish empire. On 16 November 1553, a parliamentary delegation formally petitioned the queen to choose an English husband. But Mary would brook no opposition and the marriage settlement was agreed in January 1554.

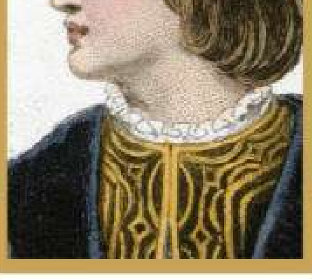


MARRIAGE MATERIAL

The prospective betrothals that Mary and Elizabeth avoided

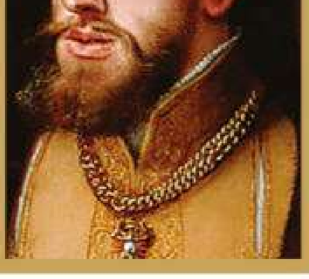
Mary and the Dauphin of France **1518**

The first attempt to secure a worthy marriage for Mary took place while she was only two years old. The prospective union was with François, the eldest son of Francis I, and heir to the throne. The Dauphin was only a few months old himself. The proposal fell apart and relations between the kings disintegrated.

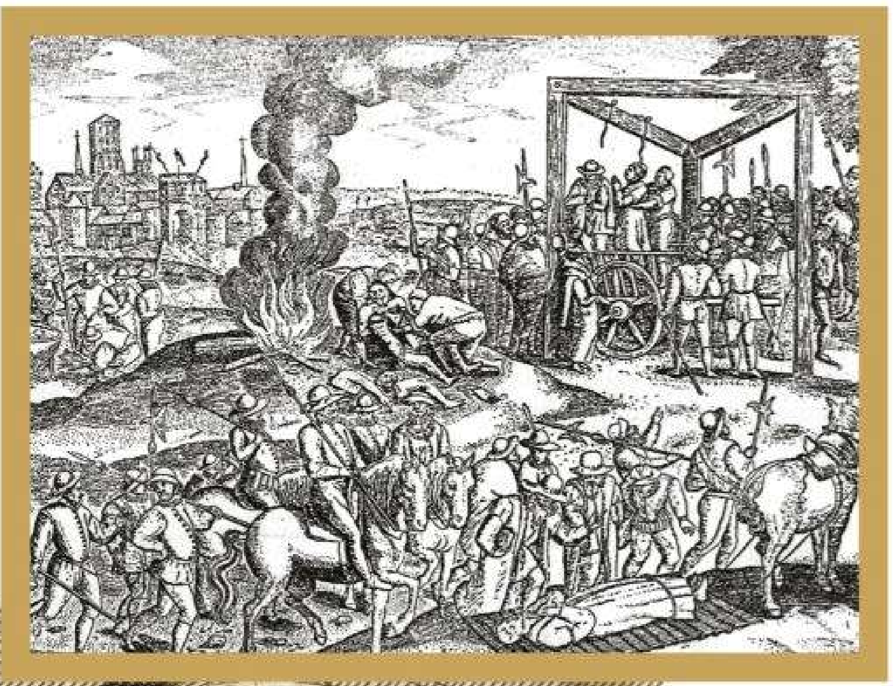


Mary and Charles V **1522**

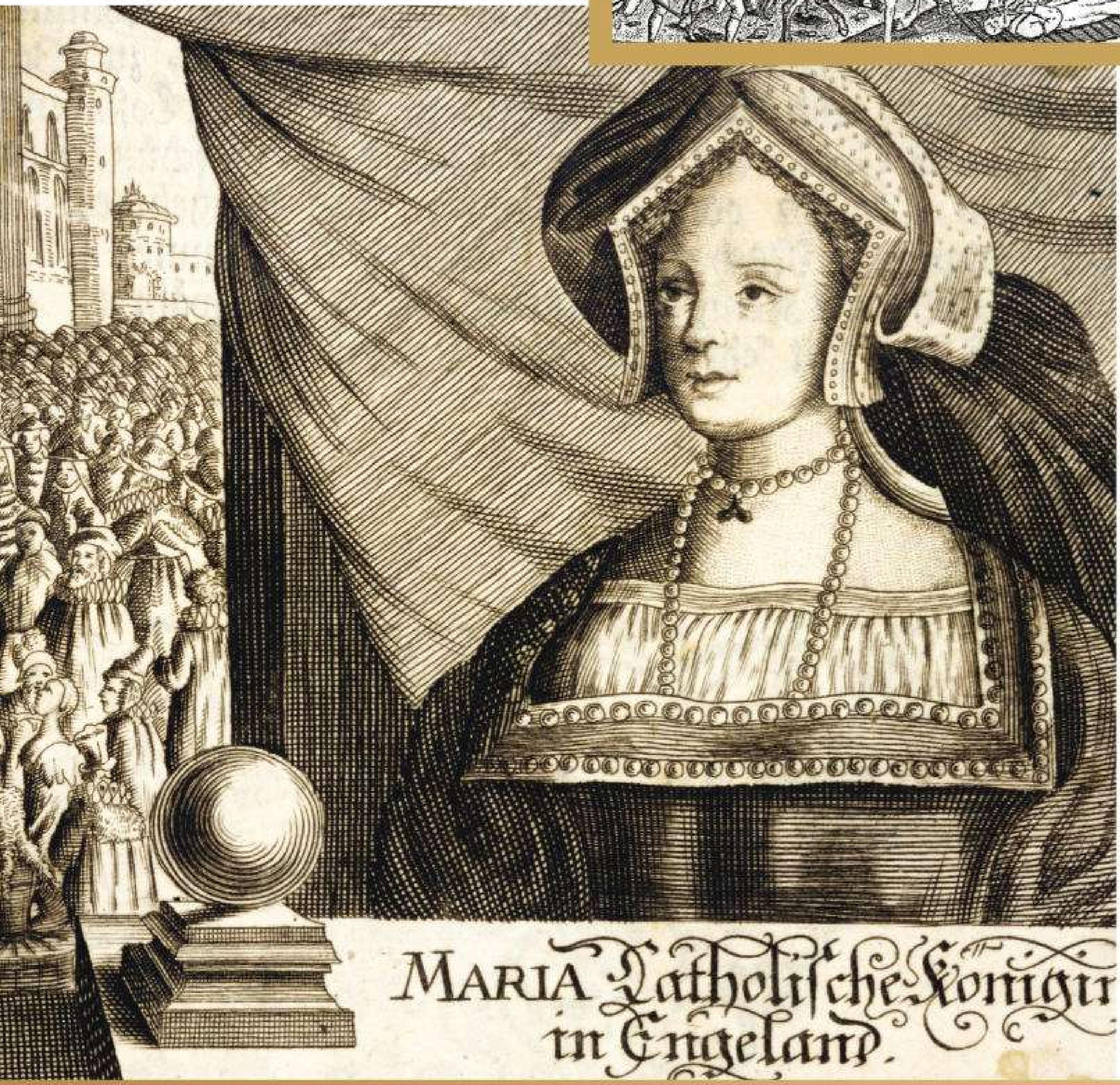
With relations with France deteriorating, Henry looked to secure his relationship with the Holy Roman Emperor, who visited England, and his aunt Catherine of Aragon. Charles was therefore Mary's first cousin. The Treaty of Windsor was signed to secure a marriage but this broke down and in 1526 Charles wed Isabella of Portugal.



The queen had failed to appreciate the strength of feeling among her xenophobic people. "The English… are most hostile by their nature to foreigners," remarked the Venetian ambassador. Proof of this came with an uprising in 1554, led by Sir Thomas Wyatt and involving a group of noblemen, including Lady Jane Grey's father. Although there was a strong Protestant undertone to the rebellion, the participants claimed their primary aim was "to prevent us from over-running by strangers."



ABOVE Mary believed eliminating Protestant leaders would see resistant subjects return to Catholicism



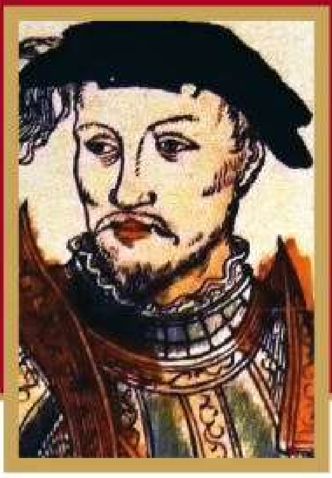
LEFT Mary I was crowned as the first queen regnant of England

Wyatt drew a considerable body of supporters to his cause and in January they marched towards London. On 1 February, Mary dispatched the duke of Norfolk to crush the rebels before they reached the capital. But his troops deserted, leaving the queen and her council virtually undefended. This was the first serious test of Mary's queenship and she rose to the challenge. Rallying the loyal troops that had gathered at the Guildhall in the heart of London, she gave an impassioned speech, assuring them that she loved her subjects "as the mother doth the child." For this one, fleeting occasion, Mary seemed entirely at ease as a female sovereign, assuming a maternal role over her subjects. It was a theme that would be taken up often – and to dazzling effect – by her half-sister Elizabeth.

Mary's address was a decisive factor in defeating the rebels, but the episode had destabilised a regime in its infancy and those closest to her urged that she rid herself of any rival claimants. Although she had been innocent of involvement, Lady Jane Grey was executed on 12 February 1554. Elizabeth had been just as careful to avoid any involvement but Mary knew that many of the rebels had hoped to put her on the throne and that was enough to have Elizabeth arrested. She insisted on her innocence, assuring Mary: "I protest before God I never practised, counselled or consented to anything prejudicial to you or dangerous to the state." Undeterred, Mary ordered that her sister be taken to the Tower the next day. Elizabeth remained a prisoner there for more than two months and was almost sent to the block when the lieutenant there received a forged warrant for her execution. Thankfully, he had the presence of mind to verify it with the queen and Elizabeth's life was spared. She was released on 19 May 1554, the anniversary of her mother's execution.

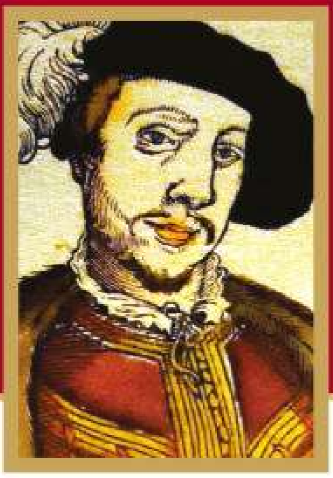
Mary and the Duke of Orleans **1527**

Following discussions that the recently widowed King Francis of France might marry Mary, 11, it was instead decided a betrothal to his eight-year-old second son, Henry, the Duke of Orleans, would be more appropriate. A contract was drawn up and signed but things fell apart when relations between the kings faltered.



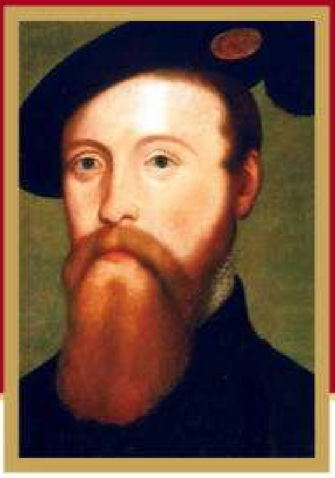
Elizabeth and the Duke of Angoulême **1534**

A protracted negotiation between England and France took place with Henry and Anne looking to secure Elizabeth's future with a marriage into the French monarchy. However, King Frances had concerns about Elizabeth legitimacy. Eventually a proposal of Charles, Duke of Angoulême, was made, Francis' third son.



Elizabeth and Thomas Seymour **1547**

Seymour proposed to Elizabeth in a letter months after the death of her father when she was 13 and he was 38. She turned him down, but he married her stepmother and queen dowager Katherine Parr instead. Elizabeth lived with them, and Seymour's unwanted advances continued. He was arrested for treason in 1549.



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Elizabeth was consigned to the palace of Woodstock for almost a year. Her every move was watched and she was not allowed to correspond with anyone unless it was by the council's sanction. Then in April 1555 she was summoned to attend her sister at Hampton Court. Just weeks after marrying Philip of Spain in July 1544, Mary had begun to experience the symptoms of early pregnancy. The sad reality is that these probably resulted from long-standing menstrual problems and a large dose of wishful thinking. As her due date drew close, she moved to Hampton Court in preparation for the birth and wanted Elizabeth there to witness her triumph at the birth of a prince. But as the weeks dragged by it became clear to those who surrounded the queen - if not to Mary herself - that she had been mistaken. Eventually, Mary admitted it had been a false pregnancy. Her sister witnessed her humiliation, rather than her triumph. Elizabeth was keenly aware that Philip found his older wife so distasteful that he took any opportunity to be away from her. It was hardly a positive advertisement for royal marriage and strengthened Elizabeth's resolve to remain a virgin.

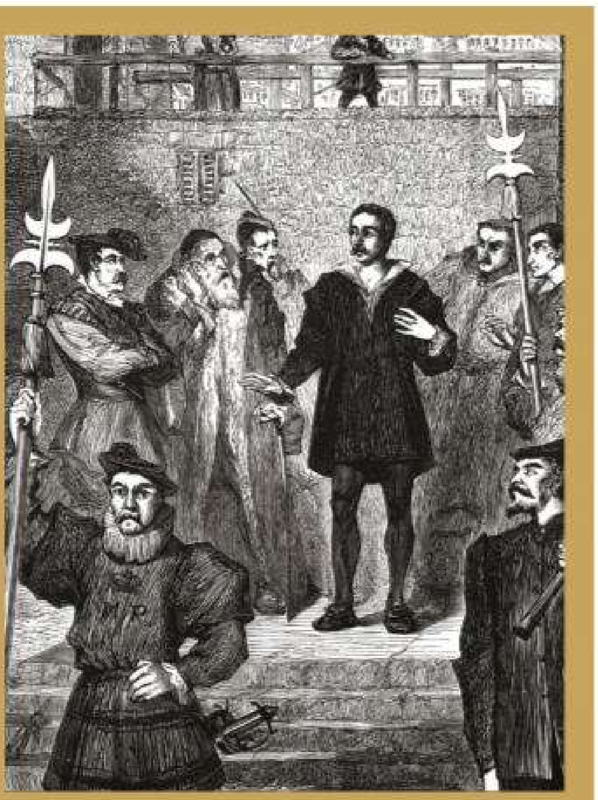
The queen's growing unpopularity was exacerbated by a disastrous event in early 1558. Aware that England lacked the financial resources to support an aggressive foreign policy, Mary and her government had resisted any involvement in continental hostilities. But in 1557 the revival of the Italian Wars, in which the main combatants were France and Spain, forced Mary's hand. Her husband Philip, who had departed England to deal with imperial matters in 1555, returned to plead with the queen for her assistance. Mary acceded to his request and persuaded her government to follow suit. But to avoid the intervention of an English expeditionary force, King Henry II of France arranged a surprise attack on Calais in January 1558. The English garrison was overwhelmed and within a matter of days Thomas Wentworth, deputy of Calais, was obliged to hand over the keys of the town to the French.

The loss of Calais was a devastating blow. It was the last English outpost in France, a reminder of former military glories, and for almost 200 years it had given English monarchs the right to style themselves ruler of France. Legend has it that Mary was so distraught when she heard the news that she declared the name 'Calais' would be found engraved on her heart. She was soon comforted, though, by a growing conviction that she

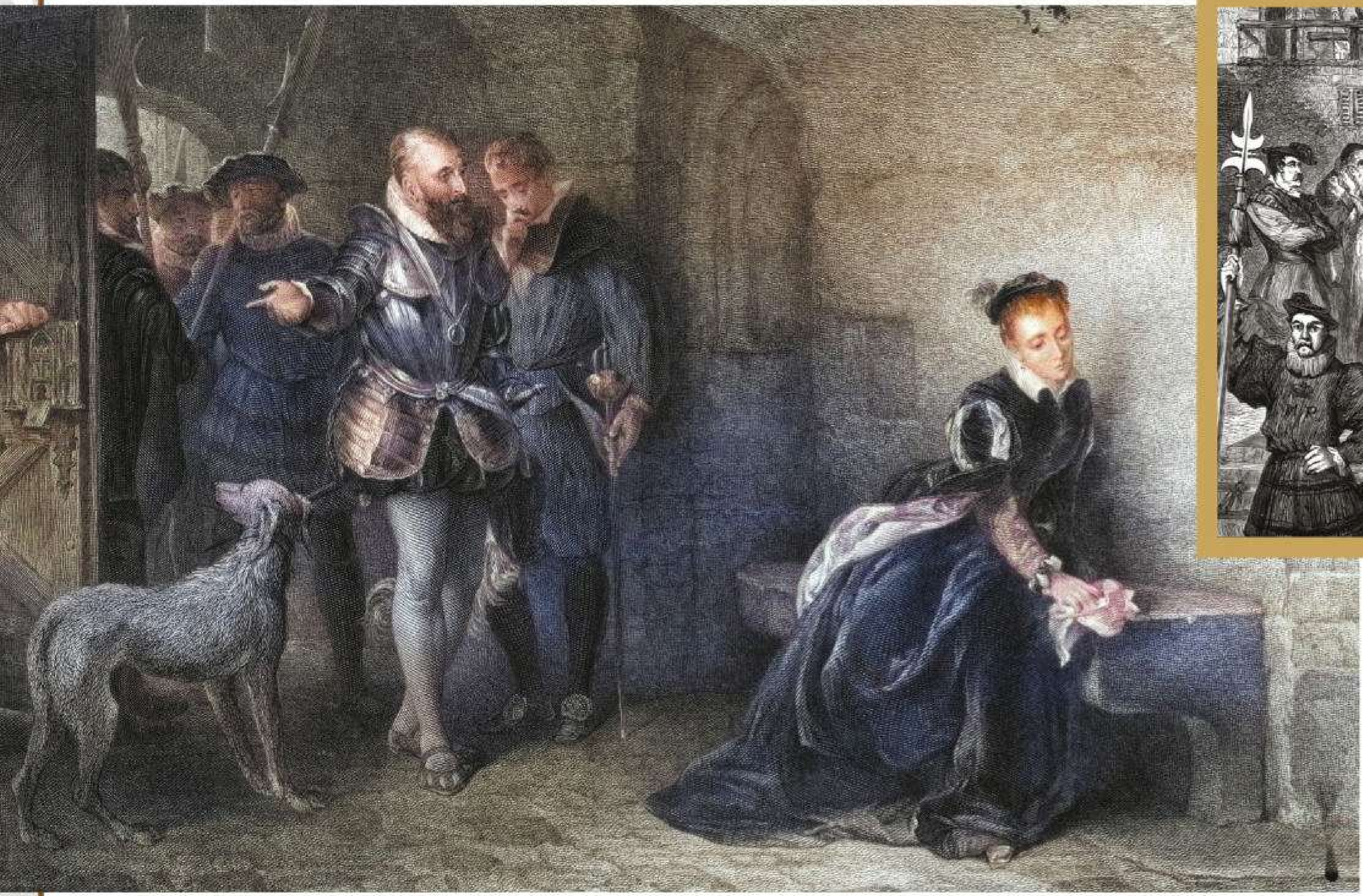
BURIED TOGETHER

The sisters now lie together at Westminster Abbey

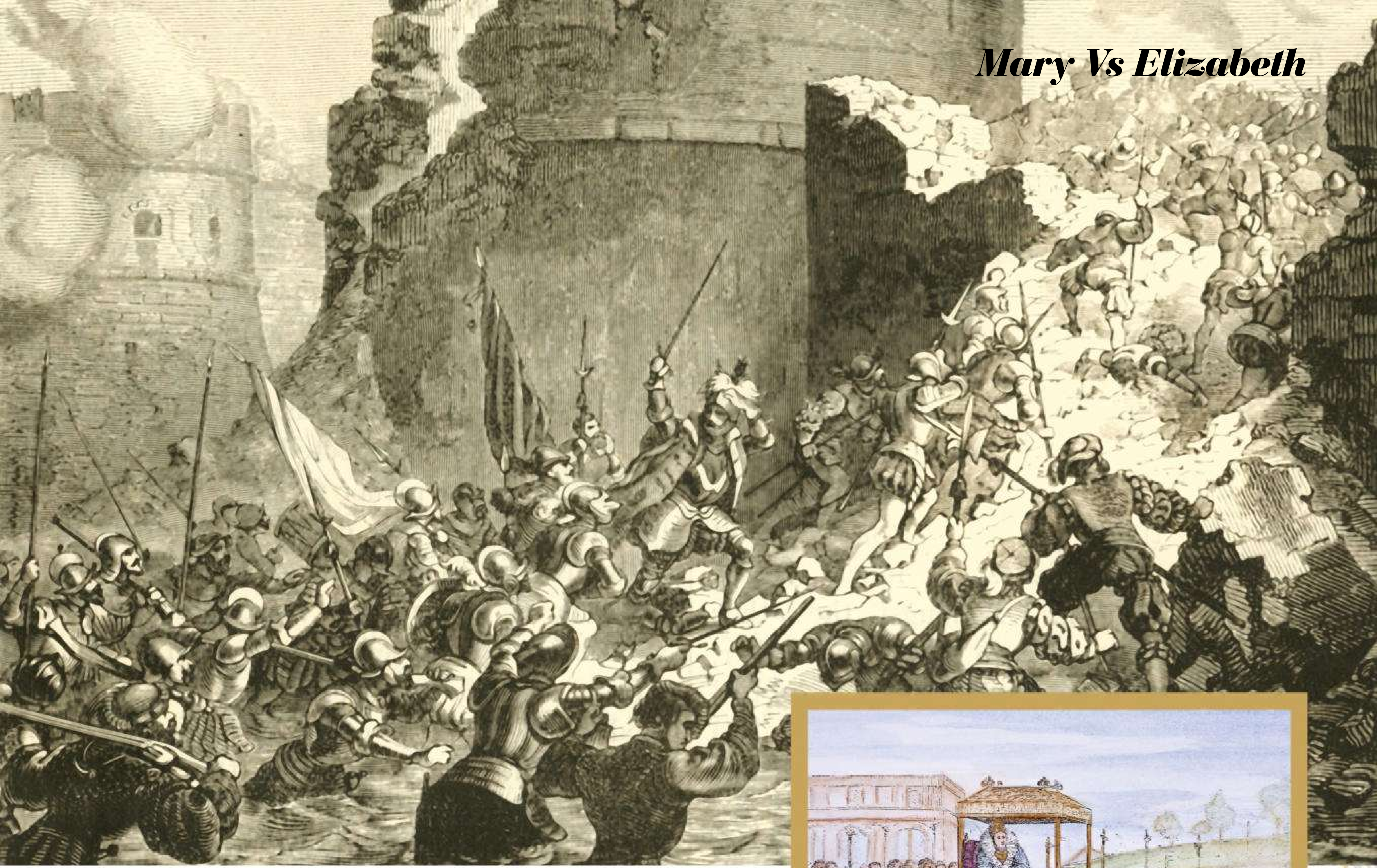
In life the sisters were frequently allied and torn apart by their changing fortunes, but in death they were finally brought together. Mary I was laid to rest at Westminster Abbey in 1558 in the north aisle of Henry VII's Lady Chapel. She was buried in the vault, under the monument to her grandfather. When Elizabeth died in 1603, her successor James I (who didn't attend the funeral ceremony) had a white marble monument to her built in the chapel as well. Her coffin was then placed on top of Mary's in 1606. The base of the monument above carries the inscription: "Partners both in throne and grave, here rest we two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, in the hope of the Resurrection."

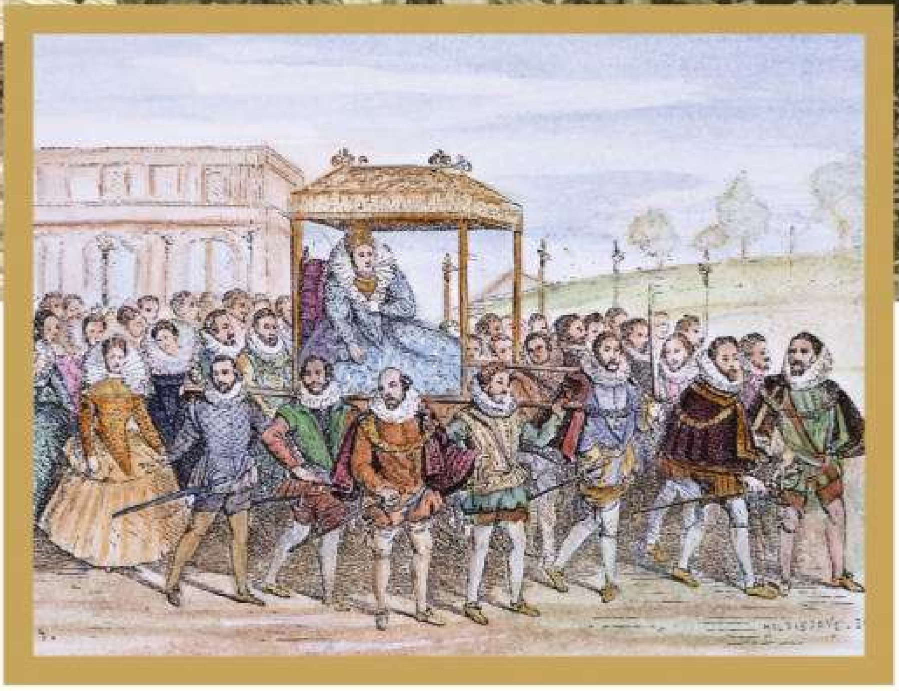


ABOVE Sir Thomas Wyatt plotted against Mary I and had supported Lady Jane Grey previously



LEFT Suspecting she was involved in a Protestant conspiracy to topple her, Mary had Elizabeth imprisoned in the Tower of London





"Mary deserves credit as the first woman to successfully claim the throne of England"

was pregnant. Overlooking her previous experience she wrote to her husband, telling him their child would be born the following March.

Few people shared Mary's confidence. "She the more distresses herself, perceiving daily that no one believes in the possibility of her having progeny, so that day by day she sees her authority and the respect induced by it diminish," said one observer at court. Undeterred, in February 1558 Mary entered her confinement. As the weeks dragged on with no sign of any labour pains, she became increasingly despondent. It is possible that the swelling in her stomach was due not to pregnancy but to cancer. Even during her first confinement it had been rumoured that "she was deceived by a Tympanie [tumour] or some other like disease, to think herself with child".

By April 1558 the queen had given up hope of a child and re-emerged into public life. The fact that she invited her half-sister to Richmond that month and entertained her with great ceremony was taken by many as an indication she would name Elizabeth her heir. "Madam Elizabeth already sees herself as the next Queen," her husband's envoy, the Count of Feria, noted. Still Mary prevaricated. Although Elizabeth had been discreet in her observance of the Protestant faith and had attended mass in the chapels royal, she'd made it clear she would not continue Mary's campaign to bring England back to Roman Catholicism.

With her health now rapidly deteriorating, Mary could not avoid the issue any longer. On 8 November she sent word to Elizabeth confirming her as heir. Nine days later Mary died. She was 42. Her husband, who had refused to return to his dying wife's side, expressed "reasonable regret" when told of her passing but almost immediately began making overtures for Elizabeth's hand in marriage.

Mary tends to be unfavourably compared with her half-sister, but she deserves credit as the first woman to successfully claim the throne of England, overcoming competing claims and fierce opposition. Carving out a position as queen regnant had been a considerable challenge. By the end of her reign a number of precedents had been set, most notably the 1554 Act confirming that a "sole queen should rule as absolutely as a king." In the address given at Mary's funeral, John White, bishop of Winchester declared she had been "a queen and by the same title a king also" and that thanks to her, Elizabeth was now "both king and queen... of the realm".

As well as benefitting from the groundwork Mary had laid for her as a queen regnant, Elizabeth had learned from her sister's mistakes. First and foremost, she had been given a stark lesson in the disasters that could ensue from taking a husband, particularly one from overseas. She had also witnessed the dangers of pursuing a dogmatic and uncompromising policy, no matter how close to her heart it might be. Above all, she had seen the damage that could be done by disregarding popular opinion. Mary had lacked what we might call 'PR skills'. By contrast, her sister would become a brilliant propagandist. She started as she meant to go on: days after inheriting the throne, Elizabeth ordered the following inscription to be added to Mary's tomb: "Marie now dead, Elizabeth lives, our just and lawful Queen in whom her sister's virtues rare, abundantly are seen." ○

TOP The loss of Calais in 1558 to the French was considered a major humiliation

ABOVE The coronation of Elizabeth I after the death of her sister marked another change of direction for England

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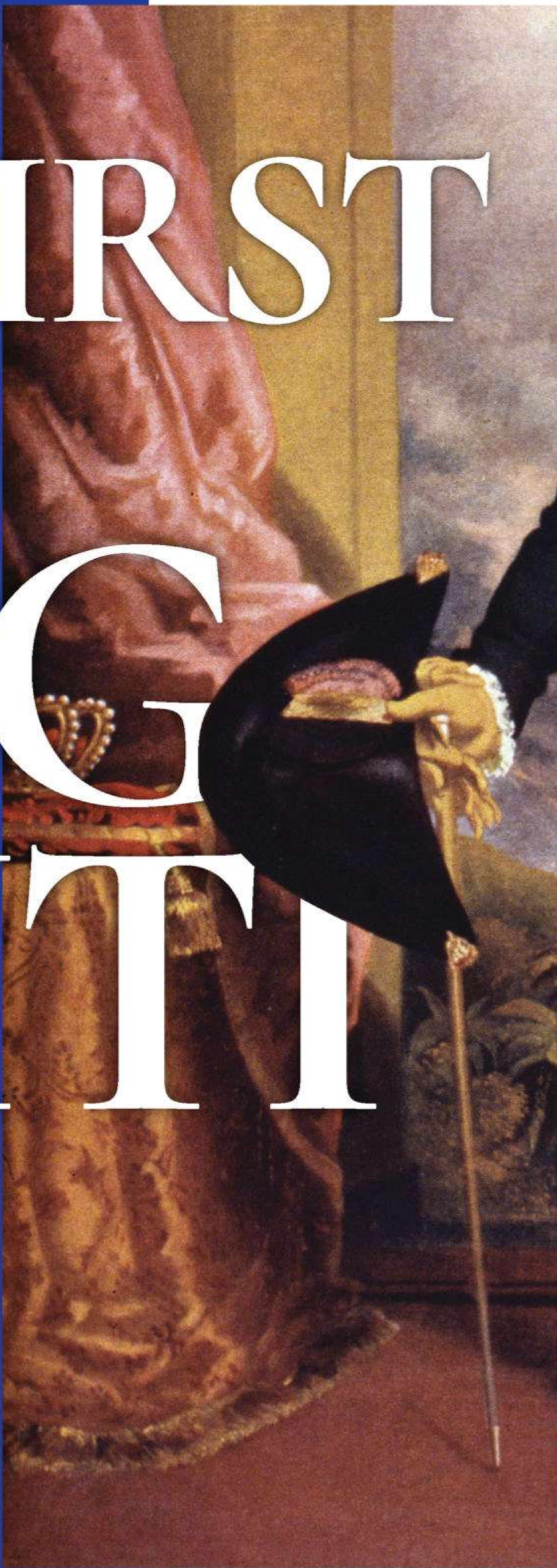


THE FIRST (and last) KING of HAITI

The short-lived monarchy of Henry Christophe, rebel leader of the Haitian Revolution

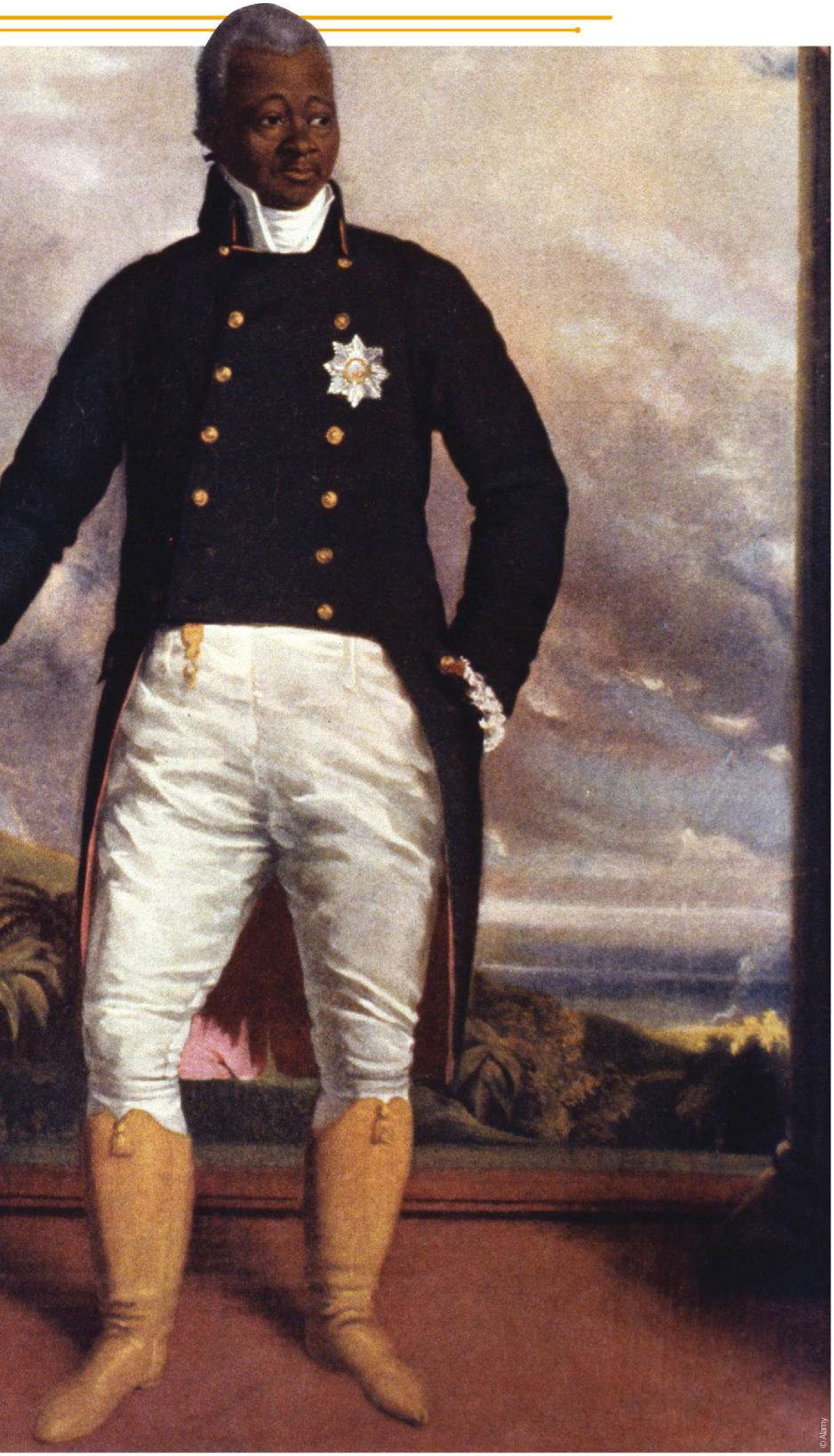
Written by Paul Clammer

©Paul Clammer

EXPERT BIO

PAUL CLAMMER

Paul Clammer is a freelance writer and author with over 40 guidebooks for Lonely Planet and the Bradt Travel Guides' book *Haiti*, the first standalone book for the country in English since the 1980s. He's been travelling to Haiti since 2007, including a year living in Port-au-Prince.



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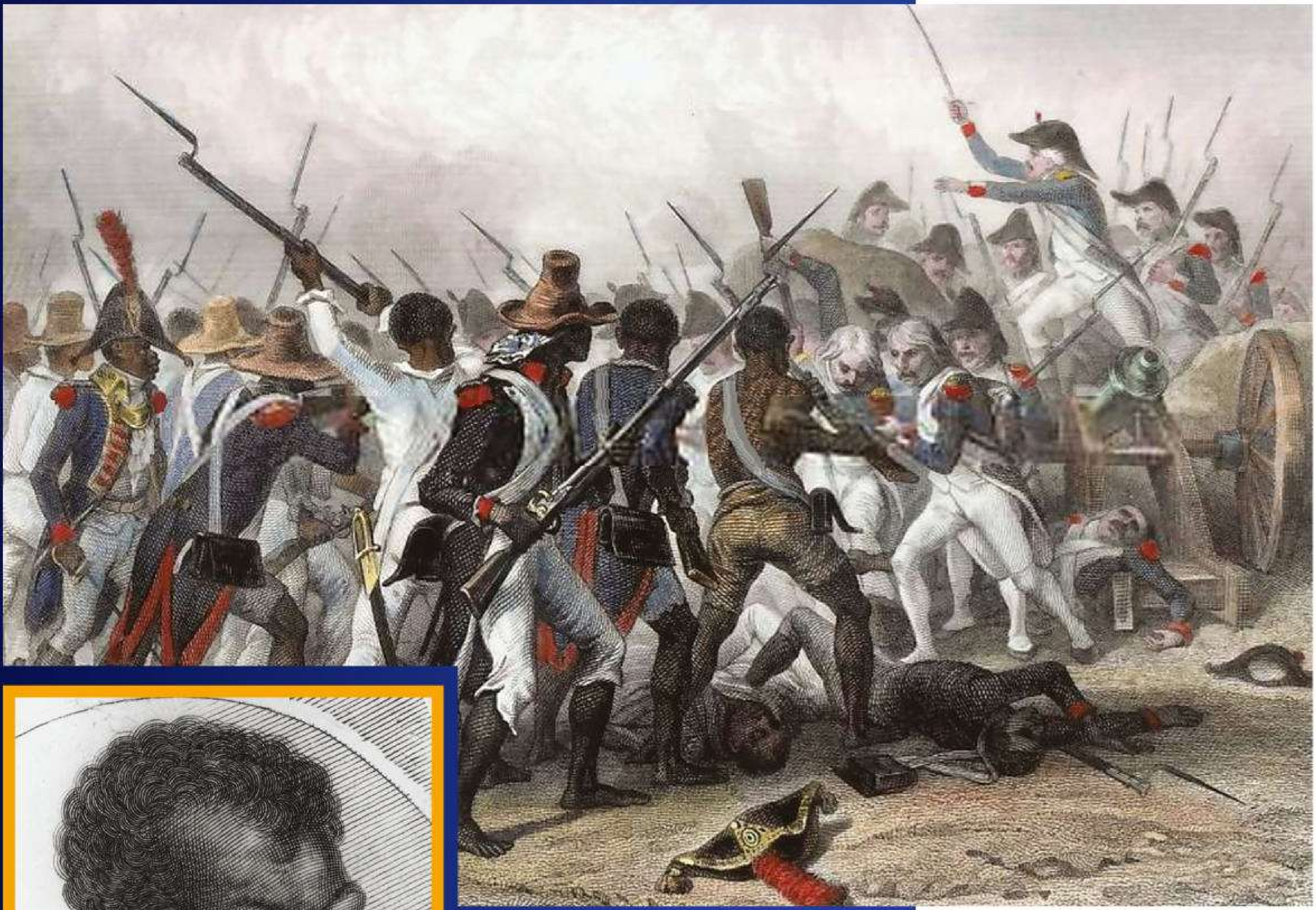
In November 1815, Londoners were treated to one of the grandest exhibitions of craftsmanship the city had seen for some time. 23 state carriages were put on public display in Charles Street, Marylebone. No one who saw them failed to be awed by their magnificence, from the gilt mouldings of the bodywork topped with crowned phoenixes and the finely painted coats of arms on the panels, to the luscious velvet interiors fringed with gold drapery. The carriages, along with harnesses, crimson saddles and silver-clawed tiger skin saddlecloths, had cost the coachmakers Crowther and Tapp an estimated £12,000 to make.

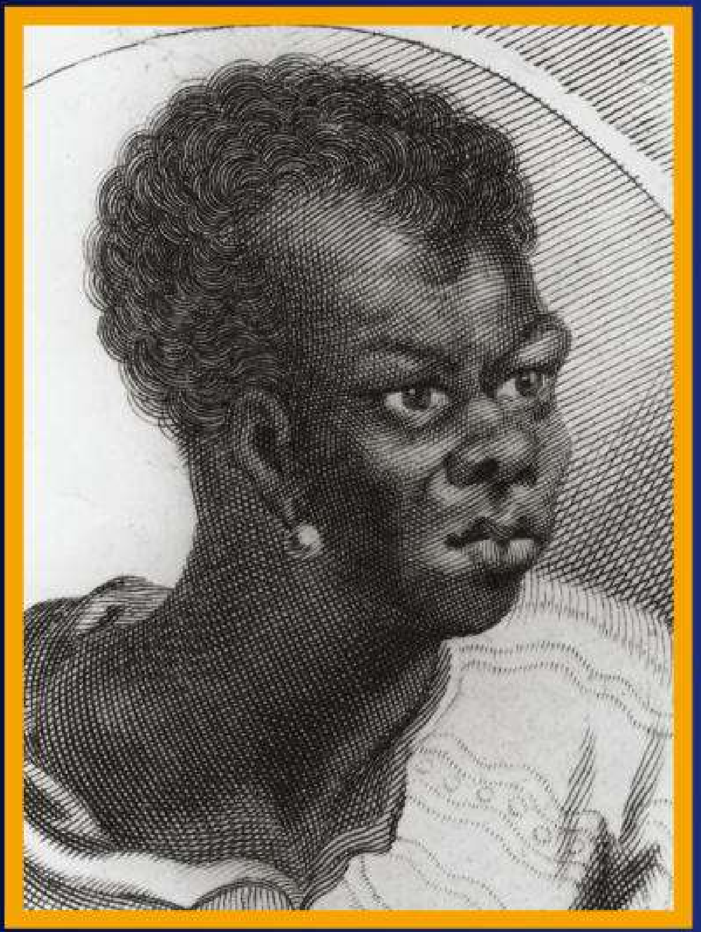
"It is to be lamented that more time is not allowed the public," wrote *The Morning Chronicle*, "to witness one of the grandest specimens of art and elegance ever combined in one piece of work of the kind that has been sent from this country." The same week the newspaper had cooed over a set of satin gowns "finished by one of our fashionable dress-makers" along with pieces from the Prince Regent's own jeweller, cut-glass chandeliers, damask cloths and marble busts. The purchaser was Henry Christophe, who had crowned himself King Henry I of Haiti only four years earlier, the ruler of a free Black kingdom in a Caribbean dominated by colonial slavery.

Although he remains little remembered today outside his home country, Christophe was a familiar figure to the Londoners who read about his spending sprees across the capital. The celebrated abolitionist William Wilberforce was such a prominent supporter of him that pro-slavery critics claimed he was quicker to toast a Black king than he was the English monarch George III. Wilberforce had helped send teachers to the nascent kingdom to aid in its development, along with the painter Richard Evans, who had been a student to the society portraitist Sir Thomas Lawrence. Christophe returned the favour by gifting Wilberforce his portrait, which was duly hung at the Royal Academy.

Christophe had risen to power through the tumultuous events of the Haitian Revolution (1791 – 1804). He had been a trusted lieutenant of the mercurial Toussaint Louverture, who had led his people to the brink of independence from France only to be captured by his enemies and shipped off to die in

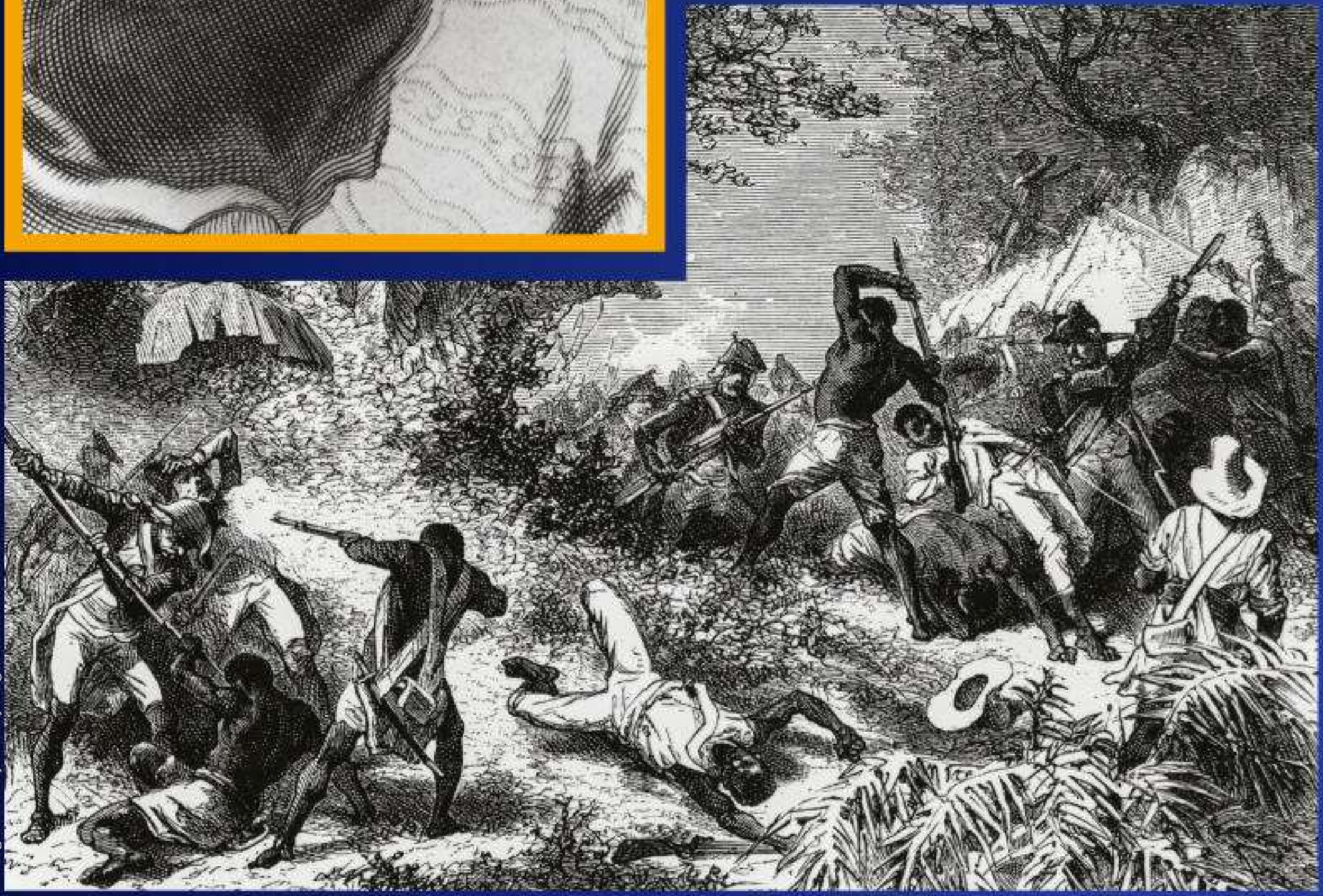


ABOVE Many of the men involved in leading the Haitian Revolution had previous military training



LEFT We know that Christophe was born enslaved in Grenada, but there is little additional detail about his upbringing

BELOW The Haitian Revolution was a massive uprising against colonial rule and slavery



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an icy French dungeon. The crowds in London would have quickly recalled the broad outlines of Christophe's story: how Haiti had been split by civil war soon after it had freed itself from French rule, and how Christophe had created a kingdom for himself in the north of the country. For a decade, he had been a staple of the English newspapers, and stories of his wealth were legion. His likeness had even appeared in a London waxwork show.

Like all the protagonists of the Haitian Revolution, Christophe had come from the humblest of backgrounds. He was born enslaved on the British Caribbean island of Grenada in 1767. Little is known of his origins, though in later life he voiced his distrust of the sea due to the privations his father had suffered undergoing the Middle Passage from Africa in the belly of a slave ship. Nothing is known of his mother.

In 1779, when Christophe was on the cusp of his 12th birthday, Grenada was captured by France. The victorious fleet then headed for the French colony of Saint-Domingue on the island of Hispaniola, carrying the child as part of the spoils of war. Saint-Domingue was at the time one of the richest and most profitable places in the world. Fully two-thirds of the world's sugar and half of its coffee came from the colony, produced by nearly half-a-million enslaved Africans.

In the city of Cap Français (now Cap-Haïtien, Haiti's second city), the young Christophe would have been amazed when the fleet took on a battalion of free Black militia troops to ferry them to North America to support the rebellious colonists in their independence struggle against Britain. The Chasseurs Volontaires were representatives of the colony's small free Black community who were trying to find a place for themselves in a slave colony by pledging their loyalty to the metropole. A month later, they were in action at the Siege of Savannah in Georgia. The regimental muster rolls have long since been lost, but by all accounts Christophe joined their ranks as a drummer boy and may even have been wounded in action. At the conclusion of the campaign, he returned to Cap Français with his comrades, nominally free, and found work in a tavern that was presciently called La Couronne ('The Crown').

> *"Christophe had come from the humblest of backgrounds"*

When the first fires of the Haitian Revolution set Saint-Domingue ablaze in August 1791, Christophe was a member of the Cap Français militia. He did not immediately throw in his lot with the slave armies but became a supporter of the French revolutionary commissioners who took charge of the city, and even helped defend it against white royalist counter-revolutionary forces in a fight that saw his city almost burned to the ground. It was only when general emancipation was declared in the summer of 1793, followed by Toussaint Louverture's transition from rebel general to leader of the French republican army in the colony, that Christophe became a fully fledged revolutionary. Under Louverture's tutelage, he rose rapidly through the ranks.

By 1802, when Napoleon Bonaparte sent an army to recapture the colony and reinstate slavery, Christophe was commander of Cap Français and put the city to the torch rather than surrender it to the French. Nearly two years of bloody conflict ensued, but when the French were worn down by incessant guerrilla warfare and tropical diseases they finally quit the island. When Haiti became free on New Year's Day 1804, Christophe's was the second signature on the declaration of independence, after that of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, another formerly enslaved general who had succeeded Louverture as commander of the free armies.

Dessalines and Christophe inherited a country in ruins that was born into a hostile neighbourhood. All the imperial powers in the Caribbean were terrified of revolutionary contagion; British Jamaica lay barely 200km from Haiti's westernmost tip. Furthermore, there was a great internal tension about what Haitian freedom actually meant. For the generals like Dessalines and Christophe, independence only meant something if it could be defended from its enemies, and so they sought to rebuild the ravaged plantations, forcing labourers back to work to produce export crops with which they could buy gunpowder to ward against the return of the French. For the Haitian citizens, however, many of whom had been born in Africa and brought to the Caribbean against their will, freedom meant personal liberty and the right to be left alone, free from the oversight of any master, irrespective of their colour.

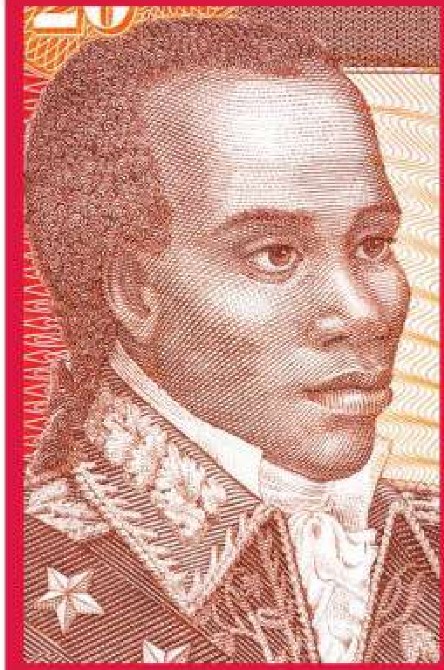
Within two years of Haitian independence, Dessalines was both crowned as emperor and then murdered in a conspiracy led by former members of Saint-Domingue's free coloured community who objected to his plans to nationalise agriculture. They nominated Christophe as his replacement as president, while reducing the position to that of a mere figurehead. It was this constitutional fix that Christophe chose to settle by force, leading his armies south to lay siege to Port-au-Prince.

The Haitian soldiers who had prevailed over the French fought each other to a stalemate and the country became divided by civil war. Christophe's rival was Alexandre Pétion, who denounced Christophe as a dictator then took all power from his senate and eventually had himself proclaimed president for life. In 1811, Christophe chose a different path and had himself proclaimed the "first crowned monarch of the New World", with the northern half of the country renamed the Kingdom of Haiti.

From a modern perspective where we read revolutions as the precursors to republics, the creation of a monarchy feels like a retrograde step, but in this new Age of Revolutions there were few models to follow. France had killed its king, but then crowned Napoleon as emperor. "Though we appear in the same hypothetical situation as the Americans," declared Christophe's Council of State as it rejected presidential rule, "being a new ▶

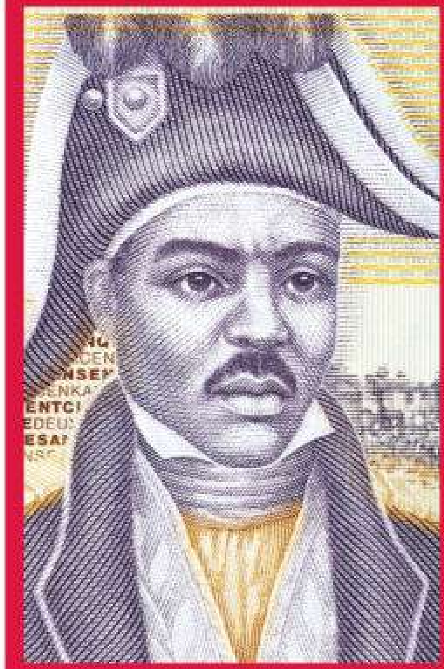
REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS

The Haitians who helped forge a new nation



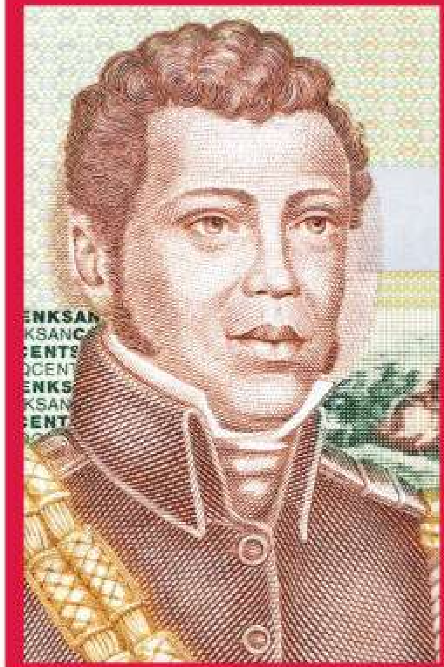
Toussaint Louverture

Known as the 'Father of Haiti', Louverture is credited with turning what started out as a slave rebellion into an organised and effective revolution. Under his leadership, Haiti established its independence, but when he was invited to negotiate with the French, he was arrested and deported to France, where he died in custody.



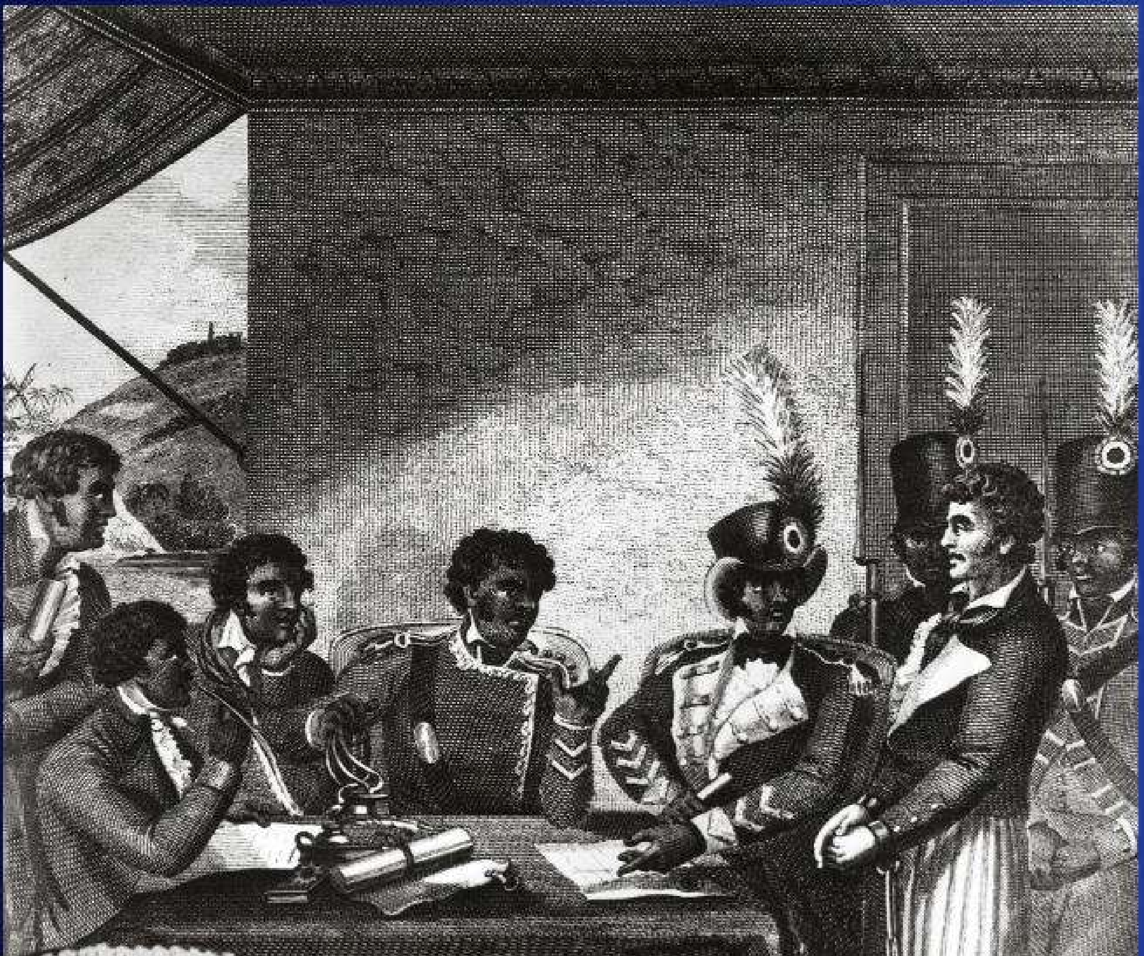
Jean-Jacques Dessalines

Dessalines was the first leader of fully independent Haiti as emperor of Haiti from 1804. It was under his rule that the island was the first nation in the Americas to abolish slavery completely. He took over leadership from Louverture after he was captured by the French, but was himself assassinated in 1806, possibly by some of his former allies.



Alexandre Pétion

The first president of the Republic of Haiti, Pétion ruled in the south as an elected ruler in opposition to Christophe's autocratic rule in the north. However, he would later make himself president for life, having become disenchanted with the conflicts that arose out of the democratic process. He died from yellow fever in 1818.



LEFT Christophe and Toussaint Louverture depicted interrogating an English spy

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BELOW-LEFT Gordon Heath portraying Christophe in the play *Defiant Island* in 1978

A 1. HAITI - MILOT - Ruines du Palais de "Sans-Souci"
qui fut la Résidence du Roi Henri 1er
ns of Sans Souci Palace, residence of King Henri the First
V. Coutan-Montasse

BELOW The remains of Sans Souci Palace, which was the residence of Henry I

people, still we possess the wants, the manners, the virtues, and we will add, the vices of the old states." Indeed, there were important local precedents: before the arrival of Columbus. Hispaniola had been ruled by hereditary chiefs called caciques, and the most celebrated of all had been called Enrique (Henry). Furthermore, many Haitians had been born in African kingdoms and recognised monarchies as a natural form of government.

This mix of Africa and the Caribbean was reflected in the heraldry created for the king and the raft of nobles created among his supporters. Elephants, iguanas, rhinos and manatees jostled for space on the coats of arms among the beasts of classical mythology and traditional European heraldic devices.

Christophe envisaged his kingdom as somewhere that could fulfil the true potential of the Enlightenment, while rejecting the cruel racism that had led to European colonial slavery. It published books and newspapers, introduced smallpox vaccination, enacted some of the world's first laws against animal cruelty and exported sugar and coffee created from the labour of free men and women. No wonder that Wilberforce was such a supporter. When the *Code Henry* was published, a nearly 800-page book of law that codified almost every aspect of life in the kingdom and guaranteed agricultural labourers a share of the plantation profits and basic access to healthcare, the president of the Royal Society Sir Joseph Banks declared it worthy of being written in letters of gold: "Nothing that white men have been able to arrange is equal to it." But the farm labourers themselves were rather less impressed; it was their labour – enforced by draconian policing – that was paying for the kingdom's new glories.

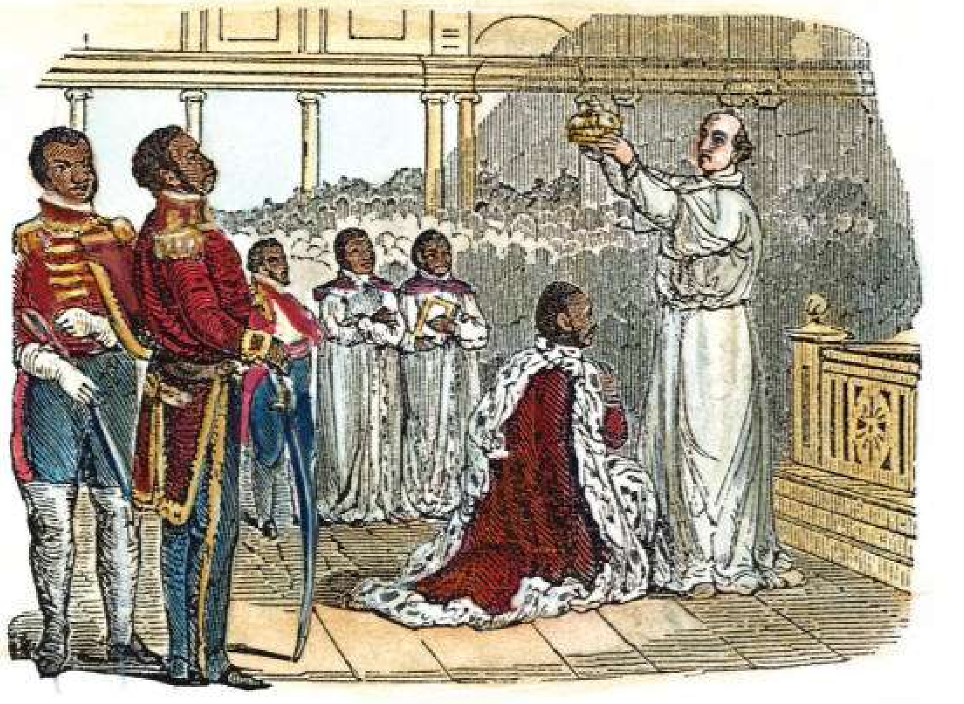
The extraordinary palace of Sans Souci was built as the centrepiece of the new kingdom, a fabulous tropical Versailles that was home to the royal printing press, mint and academy of arts. Above it, Christophe raised the enormous mountain-top Citadelle Henry that could garrison several thousand soldiers and to this day remains the largest fortress in the Americas.

> *"Christophe envisaged his kingdom as somewhere that could fulfil the true potential of the Enlightenment"*

Only one thing eluded Christophe's grasp: diplomatic recognition. At his coronation, attended by officers of a visiting Royal Navy frigate, he toasted his "brother monarch" George III, and gave favoured status to British merchants. The spending sprees of his British agents were deliberate acts of soft power designed to curry favour with London, but recognition never came. After the Congress of Vienna settled the Napoleonic Wars, Britain was content to defer to French wishes over their lost colony, and the colonial lobby in Paris was still howling at the loss of Saint-Domingue.

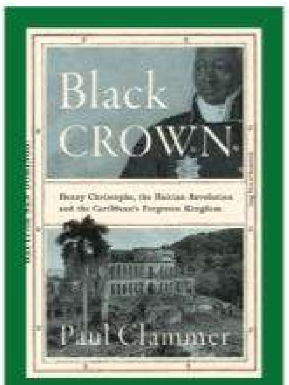
Christophe's supporters in Britain were seduced by the royal proclamations, but the reality of the kingdom didn't always match the headlines. When Christophe was laid low after suffering a very public stroke while at Mass at the age of 52, the roots of his power were shown to be very shallow indeed. No books of law, newspapers or support of foreign abolitionists could shore up his reign. Four months later, a regiment in the south of the kingdom mutinied after being forced to labour on public works: ironically they'd been ordered to shore up border defences for fear that Christophe's illness might provoke a move against the kingdom from Port-au-Prince. In the kingdom's capital the Duc de Marmelade, General Jean-Pierre Richard, refused orders to quash the rebellion and instead tore off his insignia and declared the monarchy was dead.

This new contagion spread rapidly. Within a day, soldiers at Sans Souci were abandoning their monarch. The half-paralysed Christophe couldn't even mount his horse to give orders to his last loyal troops. Refusing to give his rivals the satisfaction of parading him as a prisoner, he retreated to his chamber and shot himself in the heart. The palace was given over to an orgy of looting that lasted two weeks until the arrival of an army from Port-au-Prince, led by Pétion's successor President Jean-Pierre Boyer, restored order and finally reunified Haiti's two warring halves.



ABOVE In 1811 Christophe was crowned king of the Kingdom of Haiti

Christophe forged a kingdom by force of personality, but his vision of a proud and modern nation claiming its rightful place on the world stage had failed to carry his people with him. Haiti's plantation system died with the king. Sugar plantations were left to turn fallow as people turned to individual subsistence plots or easily harvested wild coffee and cacao. When gunboats forced Boyer to contract an indemnity with France in 1825 of 150 million francs in return for recognition of Haitian independence, tax revenues could barely cover the interest payments, condemning the country to penury. It took until 1947 for all the associated debts to be repaid – a debt of $21 billion paid over 143 years to the country it had won its freedom from by force of arms. When certificates were issued to celebrate this financial independence, they were decorated with an image of the Citadelle Henry, the fortress that Christophe had always intended to be the last line of defence against foreign control of the country. ○



Black CROWN

Henry Christophe, the Haitian Revolution and the Caribbean's Forgotten Kingdom

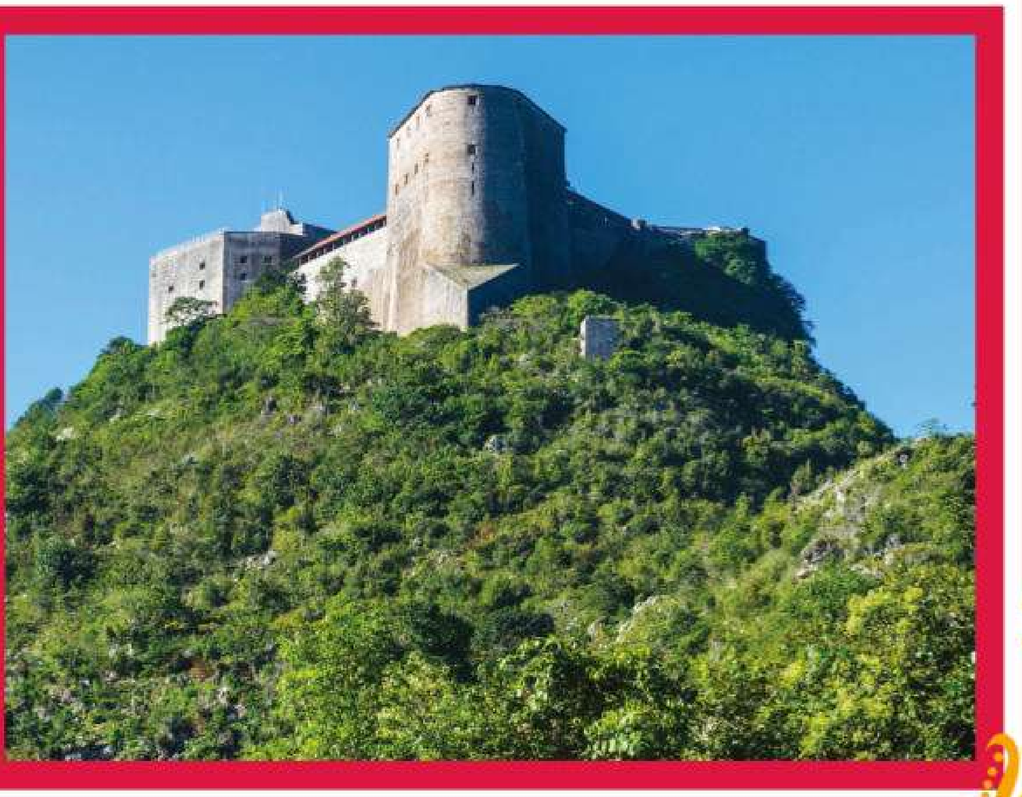
Paul Clammer

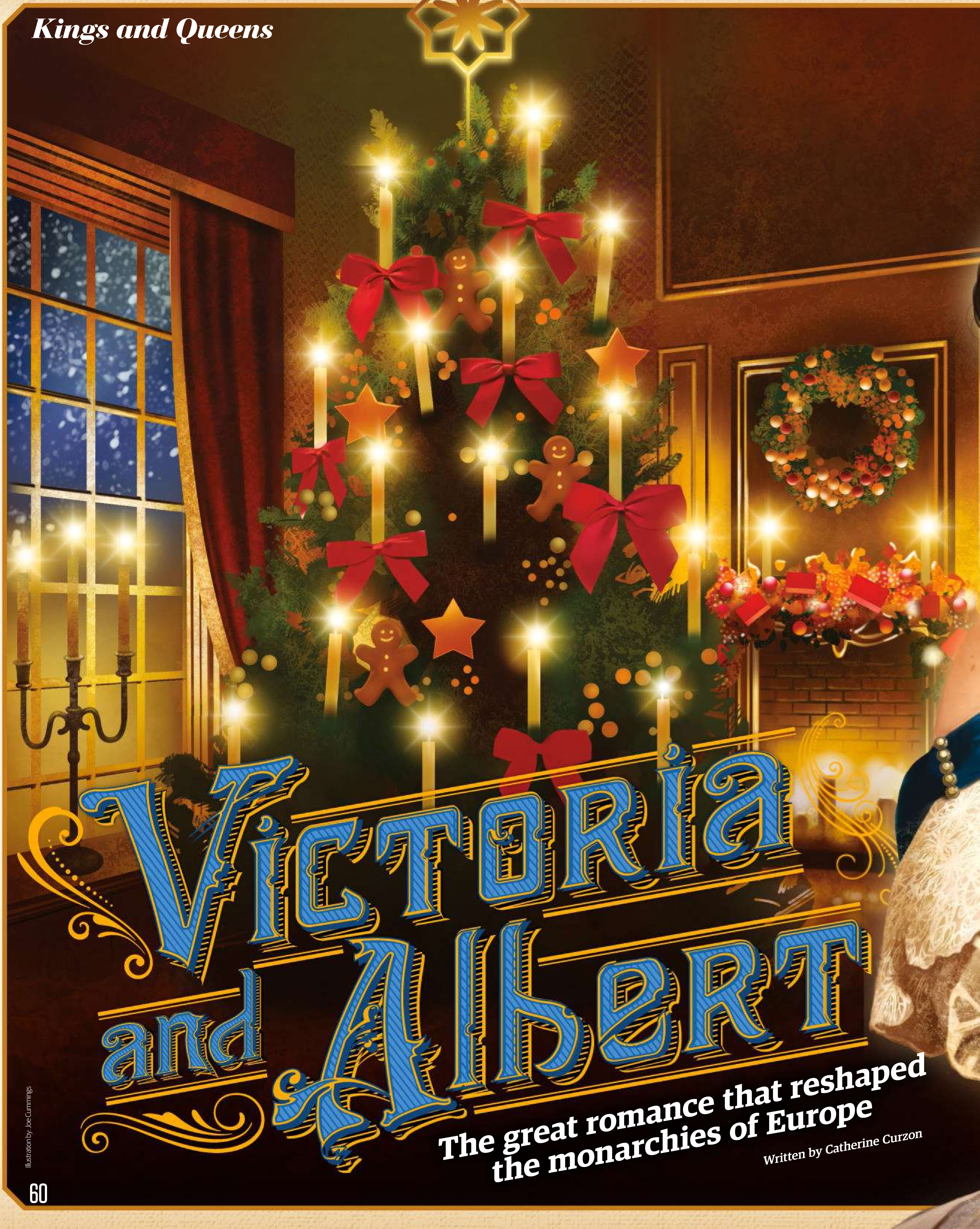
BLACK CROWN: HENRY CHRISTOPHE, THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION AND THE CARIBBEAN'S FORGOTTEN KINGDOM BY PAUL CLAMMER IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM HURST PUBLISHERS

A KING'S FORTRESS

The impressive Citadelle Henry explained

The imposing Citadelle Henry, or Citadelle Laferrière as it is also known, was built from 1806 and completed in 1820. The original construction of a series of fortifications had been plotted by Christophe's predecessor as the return of the French was an ongoing concern. The fortress sits on the Bonnet a L'Eveque mountain and, according to the citadel's own website, is referred to by locals the 'Eighth Wonder of the World'. It has much to commend it to such a title, being the largest fortress in the Americas, designed to house the local population while raining fire on the surroundings to keep enemies from destroying the new kingdom. It had 365 cannons, many of them obtained from European monarchs and carrying their crests, which you can still see today. Damaged, ultimately, only by weather and time, the Citadelle Henry remains a symbol of Haitian independence.



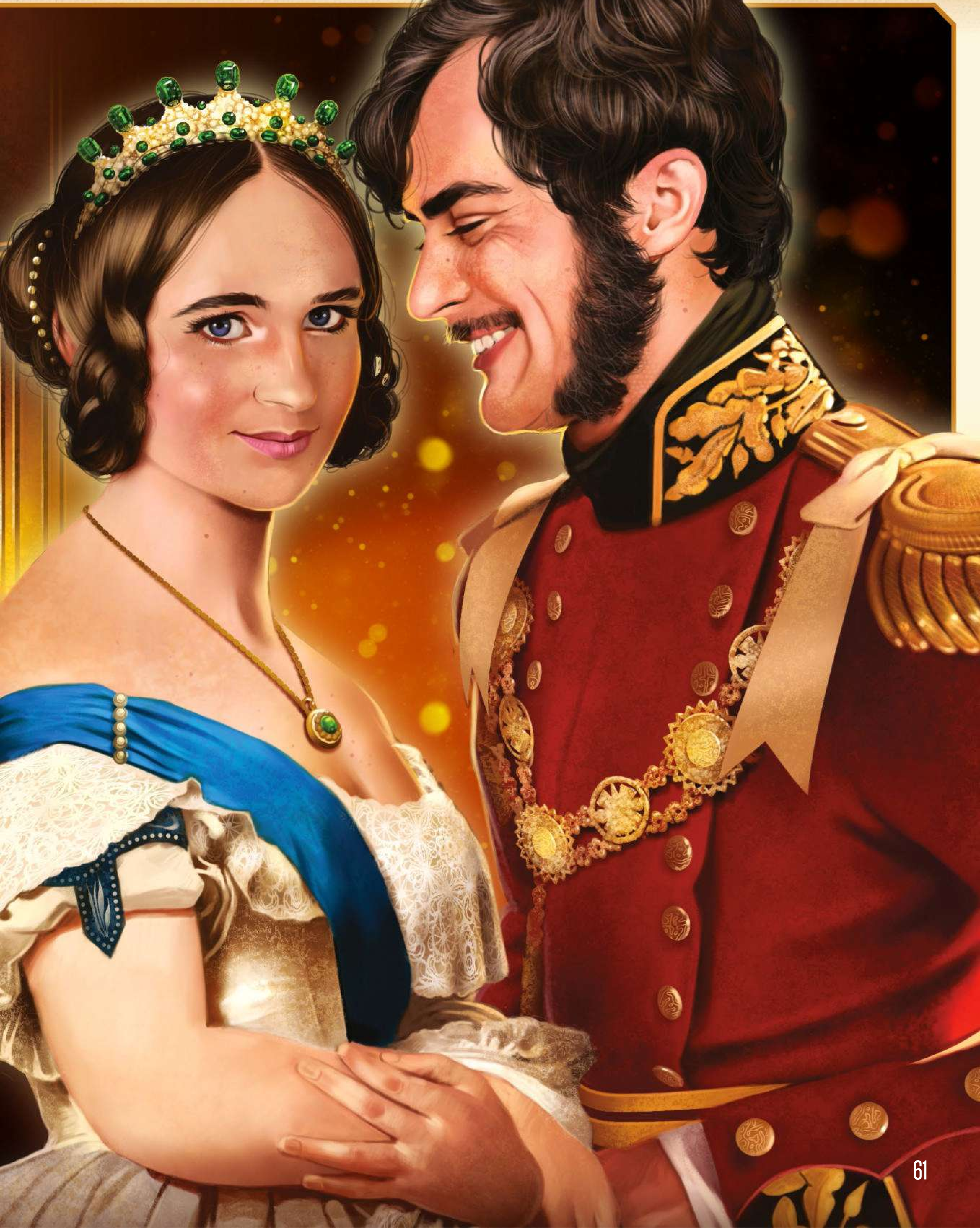


Victoria and Albert

The great romance that reshaped the monarchies of Europe

Written by Catherine Curzon

Illustration by: Joe Cummings



History tells us that the marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert was one for the ages, from love at almost first sight to its shattering, tragic end. Their story has endured as long as the image of the mourning queen swathed in black, her face set into a granite frown. In fact, their marriage was anything but a fairy story, but the couple held together through thick and thin.

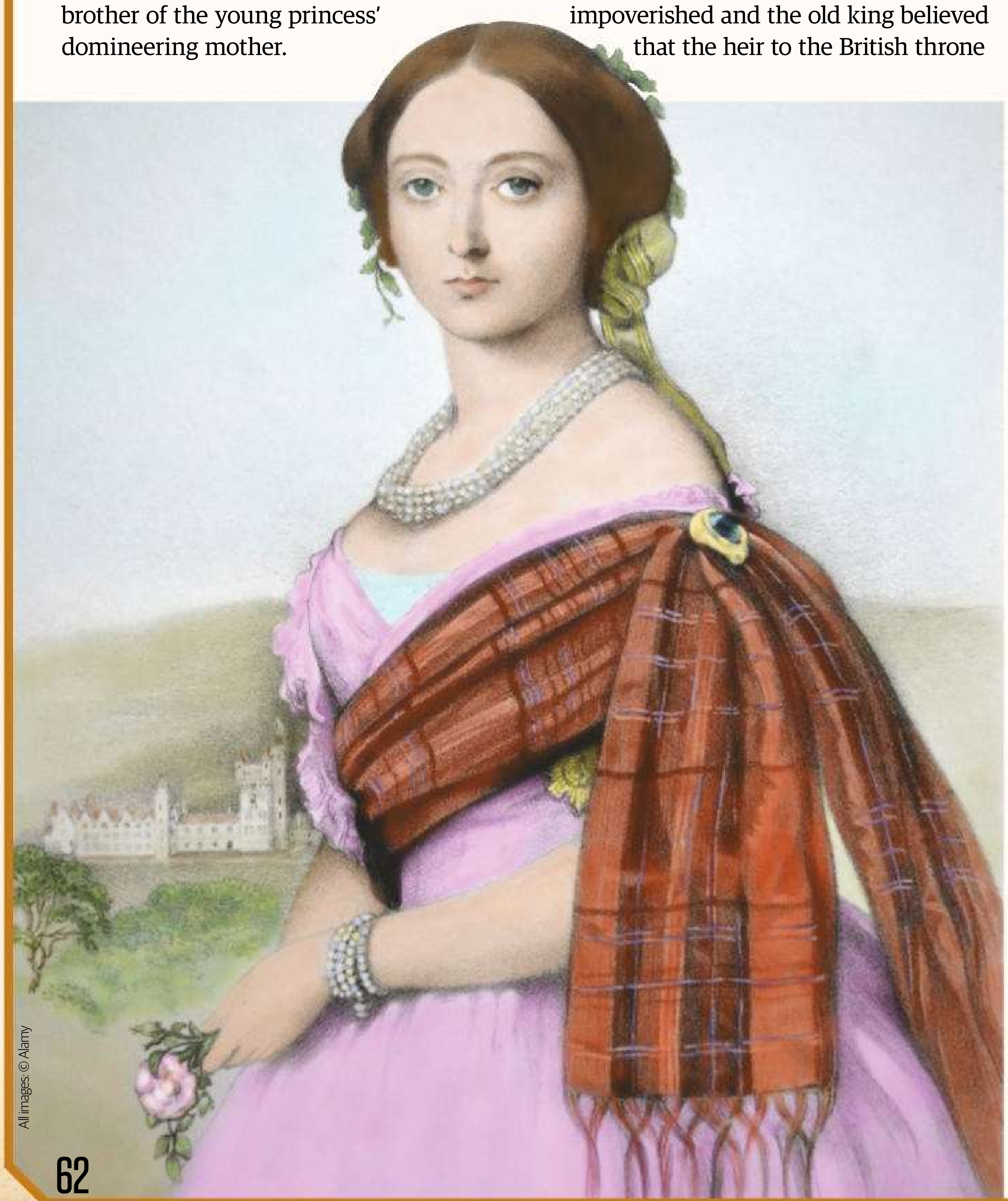
Victoria and Albert are one of the most famous ruling couples that the United Kingdom has ever known, but the path to the royal altar is rarely the smoothest nor the most romantic. As a young woman and the heiress to the throne that was currently occupied by her aged uncle, King William IV, Princess Victoria was eminently eligible. Across Europe, would-be husbands of the future queen were being assembled to make their claim for her hand and the throne beside her. One man who was determined to play a part in the courtship was Victoria's maternal uncle, Leopold I, King of the Belgians, who was the brother of the young princess' domineering mother.

Leopold had long been close to his niece and had served as both a friend and guide throughout her life, recognising that the death of Victoria's father during her infancy had robbed her of a male role model. Leopold was keen to engineer a meeting between his niece and her first cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, but William IV thought him a poor candidate. Prince Albert's ancestral lands were inconsequential and impoverished and the old king believed that the heir to the British throne should marry into wealth and power. He favoured the suit of Prince Alexander of the Netherlands, with all the wealth and prestige that dynastic match would bring.

> "Across Europe, would-be husbands of the future queen were being assembled to make their claim for her hand"

Having been raised in stifling seclusion, however, Victoria was determined to have some say in her future. Though she was in no hurry to marry, she agreed to appraise a selection of eligible princes who would be presented to her in the hope of making an early match. Among them was her cousin, Albert, who had been delivered by the same midwife as Victoria just three months apart. The couple met for the first time at Princess Victoria's 17th birthday party in 1836, and from the off Albert was among her favourite candidates. Victoria was struck by "the charm of his countenance" and his "large and blue" eyes, not to mention "a very sweet mouth with fine teeth". She was less keen on the king's favourite, Prince Alexander of the Netherlands, and dismissed him as "very plain" without a second thought.

Though there was an undeniable physical attraction between the prince and princess, Albert found Victoria's whirlwind social life simply too much for him. He found the late nights and extravagant socialising a little too much for his



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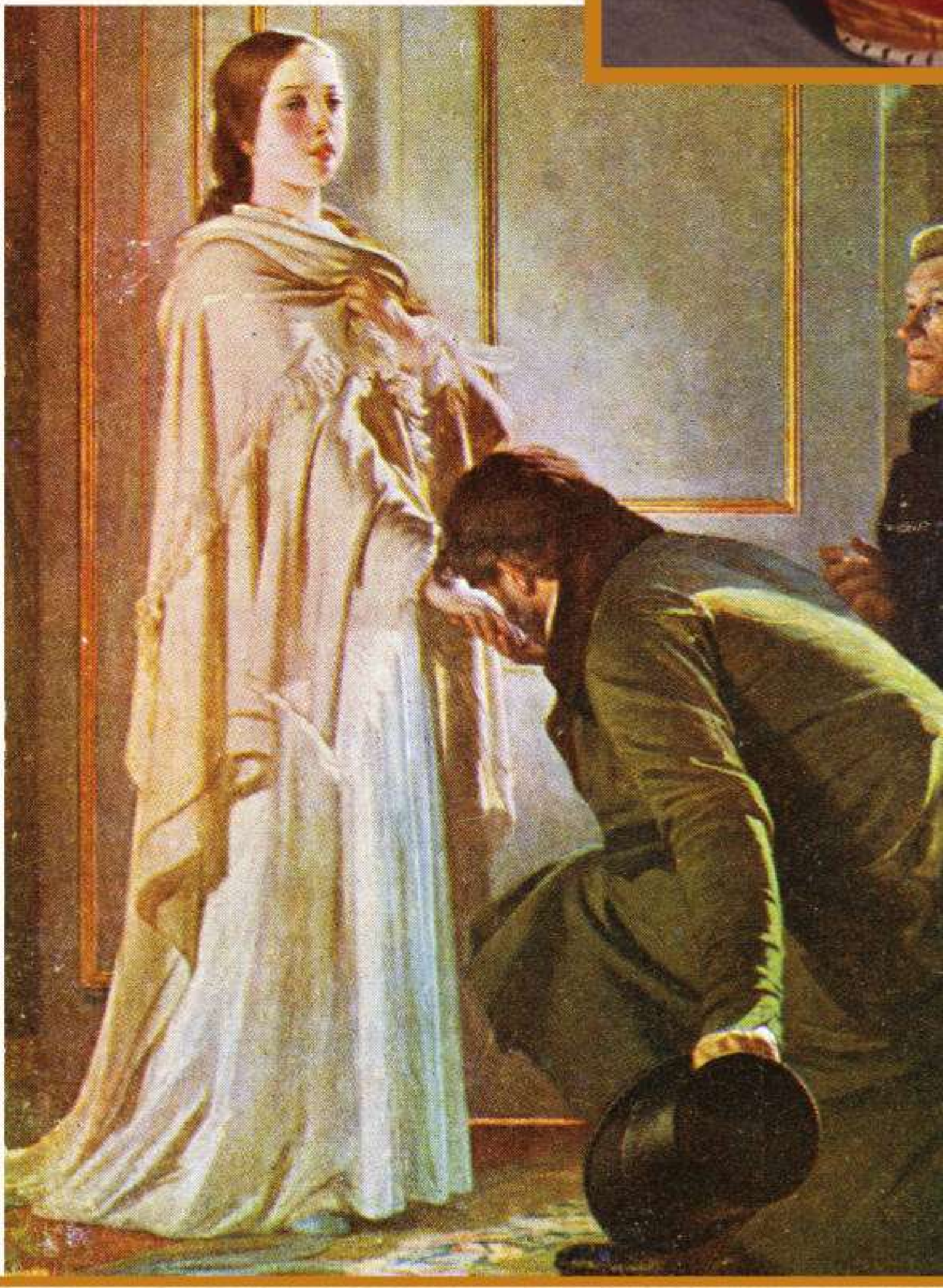
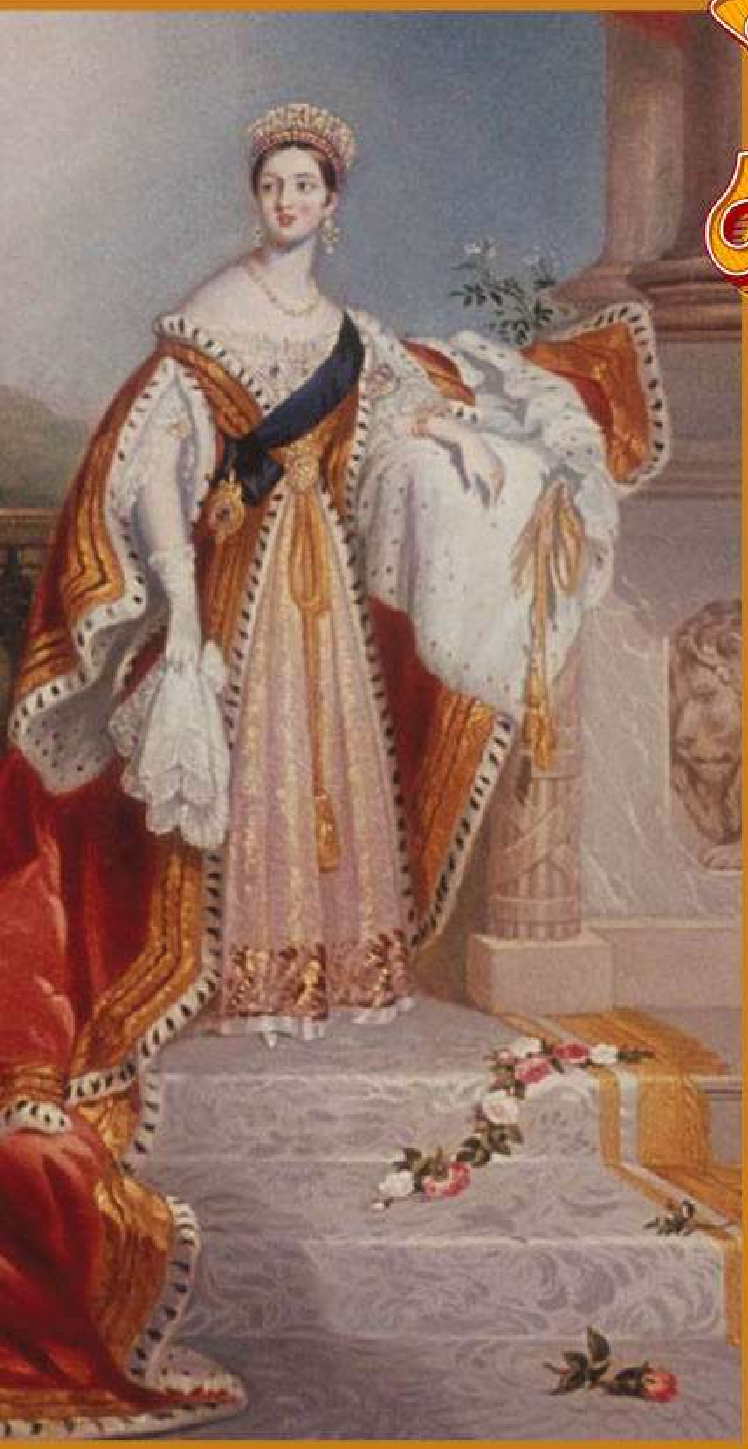
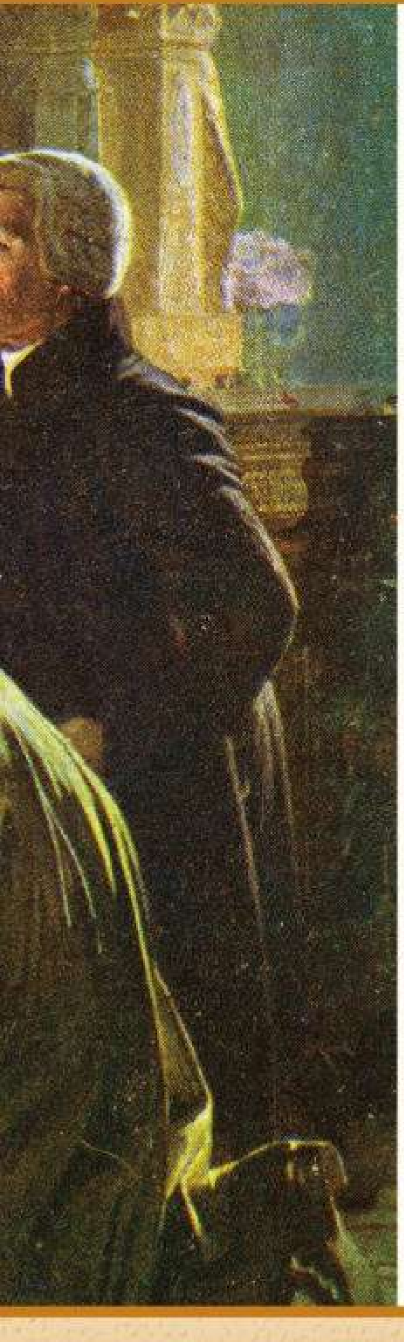


DEAR DIARY

Queen Victoria's courtship with Albert in her own words, taken from her surviving journals





ABOVE Queen Victoria as she appeared before the House of Lords for her first public appearance as monarch

FAR-LEFT An engraving of the young Queen Victoria, likely made around 1858

LEFT Victoria being informed of her accession to the throne of Great Britain in June 1837, having only just turned 18, avoiding the need for a regent

"Albert, who is just as tall as Ernest [Hereditary Prince of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha], but stouter, is extremely handsome; his hair is about the same colour as mine; his eyes are large & blue, & he has a beautiful nose, & a very sweet mouth with fine teeth; but the charm of his countenance is his expression, which is most delightful; c'est a la fois [that is both], full of goodness & sweetness, & very clever & intelligent."

Wednesday, 18 May 1836, when Albert visited following their introduction in April

"Albert really is quite charming, and so excessively handsome, such beautiful blue eyes, an exquisite nose, and such a pretty mouth, with delicate moustachios, and slight but very slight whiskers; a beautiful figure, broad in the shoulders and a fine waist. My heart is quite going."

Friday, 11 October 1839

"After a little pause, I said to Lord M. [Lord Melbourne, Prime Minister], that I had made up my mind (about marrying dearest Albert, whom I adore;) - 'You have?' he said; 'well then about the time?' Not for a year, I thought; which he said was too long; that Parliament must be assembled in order to make a provision for him, and that if it was settled 'it shouldn't be talked about', said Lord M."

Monday, 14 October 1839

"I said to him, that I thought he must be aware why I wished them to come here, and that it would make me too happy if he would consent to what I wished (to marry me); we embraced each other over and over again, and he was so kind, so affectionate; oh! to feel I was, and am, loved by such an Angel as Albert, was too great delight to describe!"

Tuesday, 15 October 1839

"Dearest Albert took my face in both his hands and kissed me most tenderly, and said: 'Ich habe dich so lieb, ich kann nicht sagen wie! [I love you so much I can't say how]'"

Saturday, 2 November 1839

"My dearest dearest dear Albert sat on a footstool by my side, and his excessive love and affection gave me feelings of heavenly love and happiness, I never could have hoped to have felt before! He clasped me in his arms, and we kissed each other again and again! His beauty, his sweetness and gentleness,- really how can I ever be thankful enough to have such a Husband! "

Monday, 10 February 1840, the day of their wedding constitution and took himself off to bed early, leaving Victoria to dance the night away with his romantic rivals.

Despite their opposing opinions on late nights and partying, Victoria and Albert were soon sharing dances, sitting beside one another at the table and growing closer than any of the other guests. However, despite being enchanted by his good looks and conversation, Princess Victoria wanted to live a little before she settled down to get married to anybody, no matter how much she liked them. After the celebrations were over Albert went home to Belgium, leaving Victoria to weep over his departure.

Despite the geographical distance between them, the friendship between the two was soon cemented by a regular correspondence, with letters flying back and forth at a rate of knots. Though there was no engagement and certainly no talk of marriage, Victoria let their uncle Leopold know that he had been correct to assume that she would find Albert an attractive prospect. She wrote to him to convey her thanks for the introduction and confided: "He possesses every quality that could be desired to render me perfectly happy." In the pages of her private diary, she rhapsodised about his good looks and, perhaps most important of all, his enchanting personality.

Victoria succeeded to the throne in June 1837. As queen, there was increased pressure on her to marry and produce an heir, but still she waited. However, as the next two years passed she and Albert's friendship became ever more intimate. Victoria's childhood had been dominated by her ambitious and controlling mother, the Duchess of Kent, and though as queen she was able to banish the duchess to the furthest corner of Buckingham Palace, protocol still dictated that, as an unmarried young woman, she was expected to live with her mother. Victoria found this prospect almost unbearable and listened with interest when Lord Melbourne, the prime minister who became her mentor, suggested that she could escape from her mother's clutches once and for all if she married. There was only one man whom Victoria could imagine fulfilling that most intimate of roles, and she began to make enquiries regarding Albert's education, seeking and receiving reassurance that he would be suited to the role of consort to the sovereign.

> "PROTOCOL DICTATED THAT NOBODY COULD PROPOSE TO THE MONARCH; IT WAS UP TO THE QUEEN TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE"

Queen Victoria invited Albert to visit England again in October 1839 and after greeting him she confided in her diary that "Albert really is quite charming, and so excessively handsome… my heart is quite going." In the young queen's girlish excitement we see a side to Victoria, for so long remembered to history as dour and mirthless, that has all but been forgotten. If Albert was tired of the queen keeping him dangling on a hook without making a commitment, all that was about to change.

Protocol dictated that nobody could propose to the monarch, so it was up to the queen to make the first move, and after a discussion with prime minister Lord Melbourne about how she should go about it, Victoria was ready to pop the question. Five days after Albert arrived in the United Kingdom Victoria summoned him to a private meeting in her blue closet and proposed to him. The young prince readily accepted and the happy couple, alone at last, shared an enthusiastic embrace.

"To feel I was, and am, loved by such as angel as Albert, was too great to describe," wrote Victoria of the proposal. "He is perfection." The queen may well have won the heart of the man she wanted, but he was far from the ideal choice from a political perspective. Every royal marriage was expected to be a wise dynastic match but in choosing Albert, Victoria had selected one of the most unimpressive candidates available to her as queen of

RIGHT
The marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert on 10 February 1840

RIGHT-INSET
This sapphire and diamond coronet was designed by Prince Albert as a gift to Queen Victoria

RIGHT Victoria awaiting her coronation in 1838

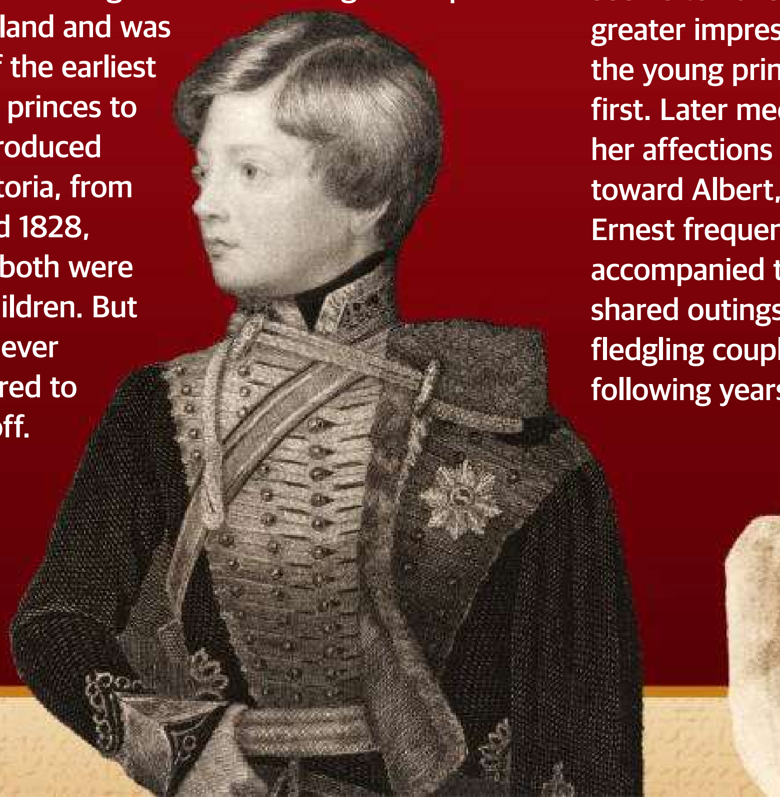
FAR-RIGHT
A portrait of a young Prince Albert

A PRINCESS IN DEMAND

Many young princes were paraded before Victoria

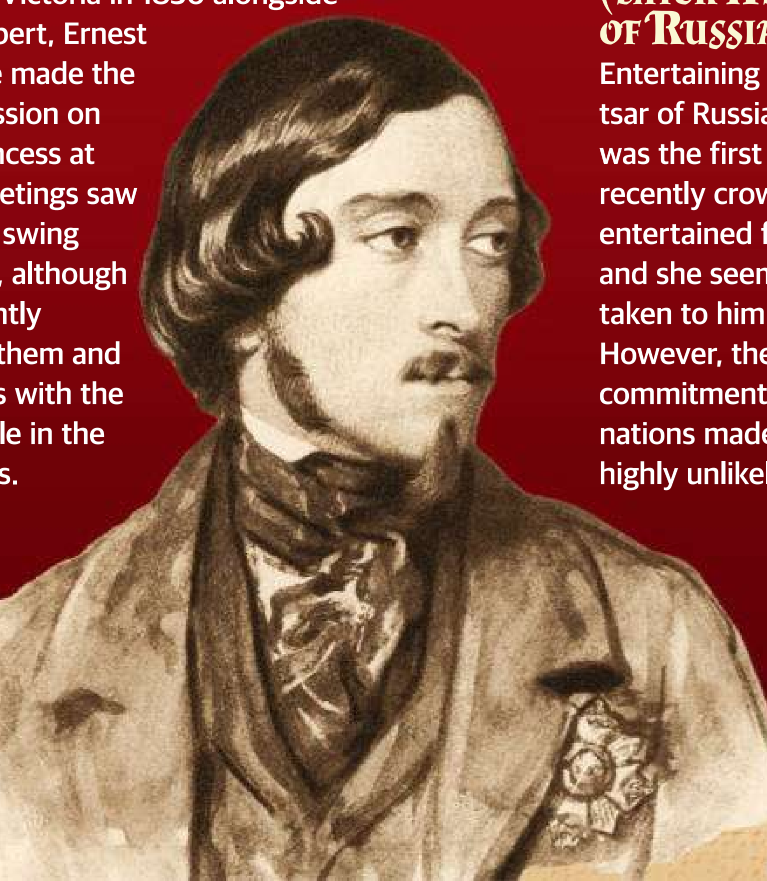
Prince George (later George V of Hanover)

The future King of Hanover had grown up in England and was one of the earliest young princes to be introduced to Victoria, from around 1828, when both were still children. But they never appeared to hit it off.



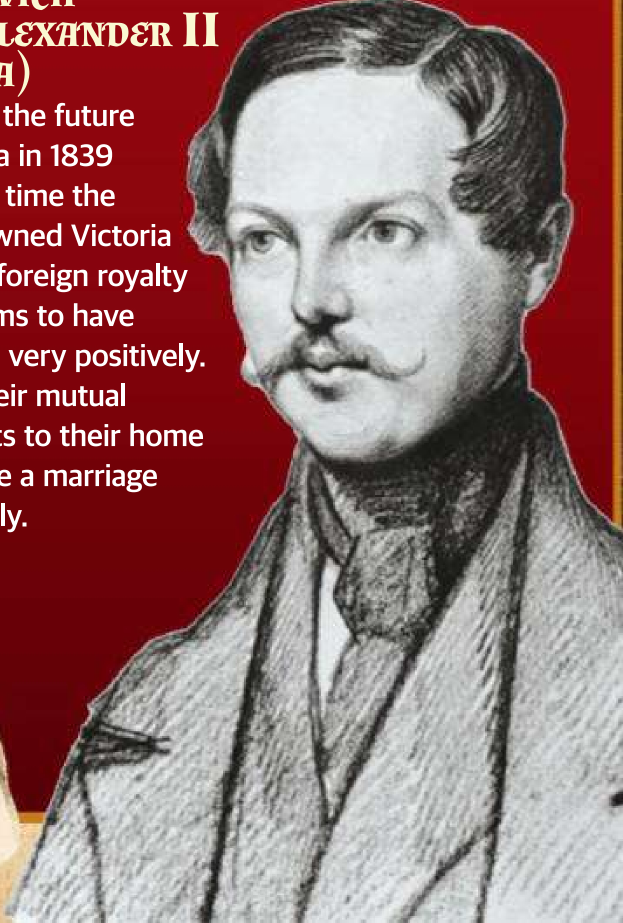
Ernest, Prince of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha

Introduced to Victoria in 1836 alongside his brother Albert, Ernest seems to have made the greater impression on the young princess at first. Later meetings saw her affections swing toward Albert, although Ernest frequently accompanied them and shared outings with the fledgling couple in the following years.



Grand Duke Alexander Nikolaevich (later Alexander II of Russia)

Entertaining the future tsar of Russia in 1839 was the first time the recently crowned Victoria entertained foreign royalty and she seems to have taken to him very positively. However, their mutual commitments to their home nations made a marriage highly unlikely.



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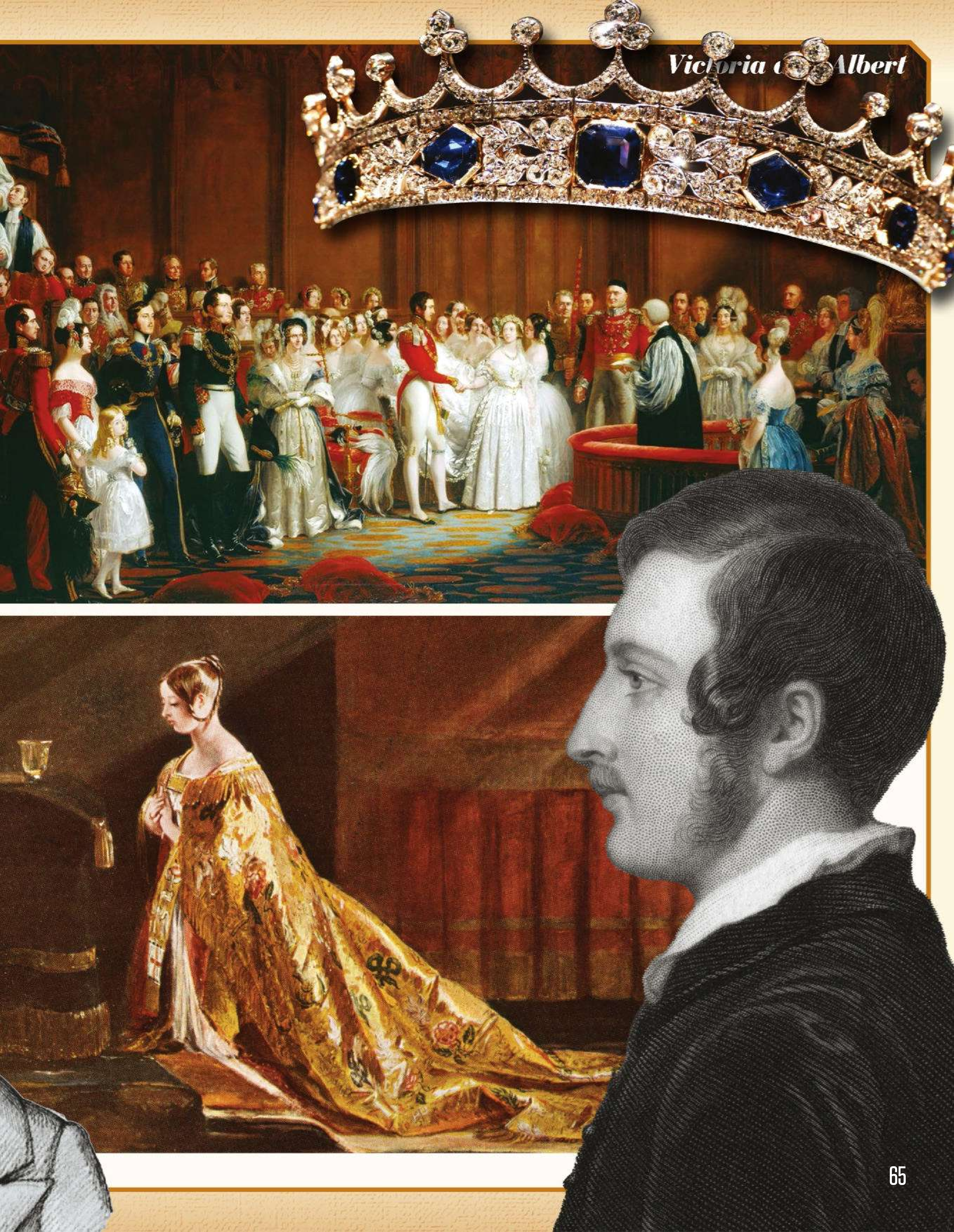


> "As they settled into the relaxed patterns of a long marriage, Victoria and Albert remained one another's strongest champions"

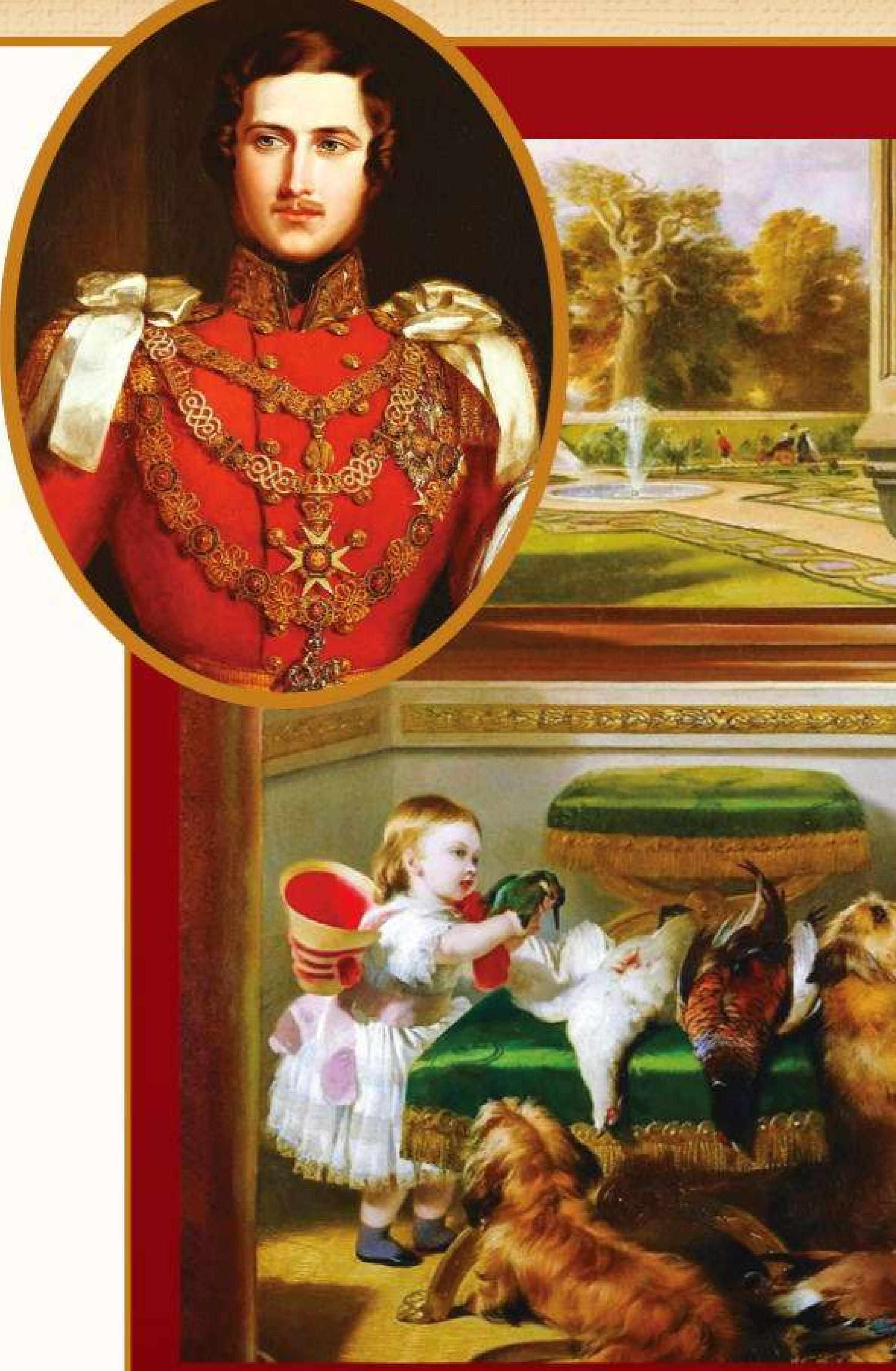
a major world power. Albert might well be accomplished, handsome and attentive, but he was also only a serene highness, the lowest royal rank of all. That was taken care of shortly before the couple were married, when Albert was naturalised and granted the title of royal highness.

The wedding of Victoria and Albert took place on 10 February 1840 and was the first of a reigning English queen since that of Queen Mary nearly three centuries earlier. Enormous crowds turned out to watch the procession from Buckingham Palace to the Chapel Royal of St James's Palace, desperate to catch a glimpse of the radiant bride and her handsome groom. Victoria pinned a sapphire brooch her fiancé had given her to a white wedding dress, and her choice of gown popularised the colour as the fashionable choice for brides. It is a tradition that has stuck, even though Victoria was far from the first bride to marry in white. In a romantic gesture that charmed the already besotted queen, Albert composed a duet entitled *Love Has Now United Us*, which he performed for his bride at Buckingham Palace.

The love affair between the newlyweds was passionate and devoted, unlike the unhappy arranged matches of some of Victoria's predecessors and contemporaries. As the evening of their wedding wore on and the couple stole some time alone, Victoria settled on her new husband's knee before a dreadful headache caused her to rest. Yet as Albert nursed his bride until she felt better, Victoria was sure that she had found someone who would nurture and care for her for the rest of their life together. The couple finally went to bed later that night, with Victoria excitedly recording that they shared one bed at last. That night was all she had hoped for and Victoria poured out her feelings to her diary, breathless from the hours she spent "in his arms, and on his dear bosom, and to be called by names of such tenderness, I have never yet heard used to me before – was bliss beyond belief! Oh! This was the happiest day of my life!"

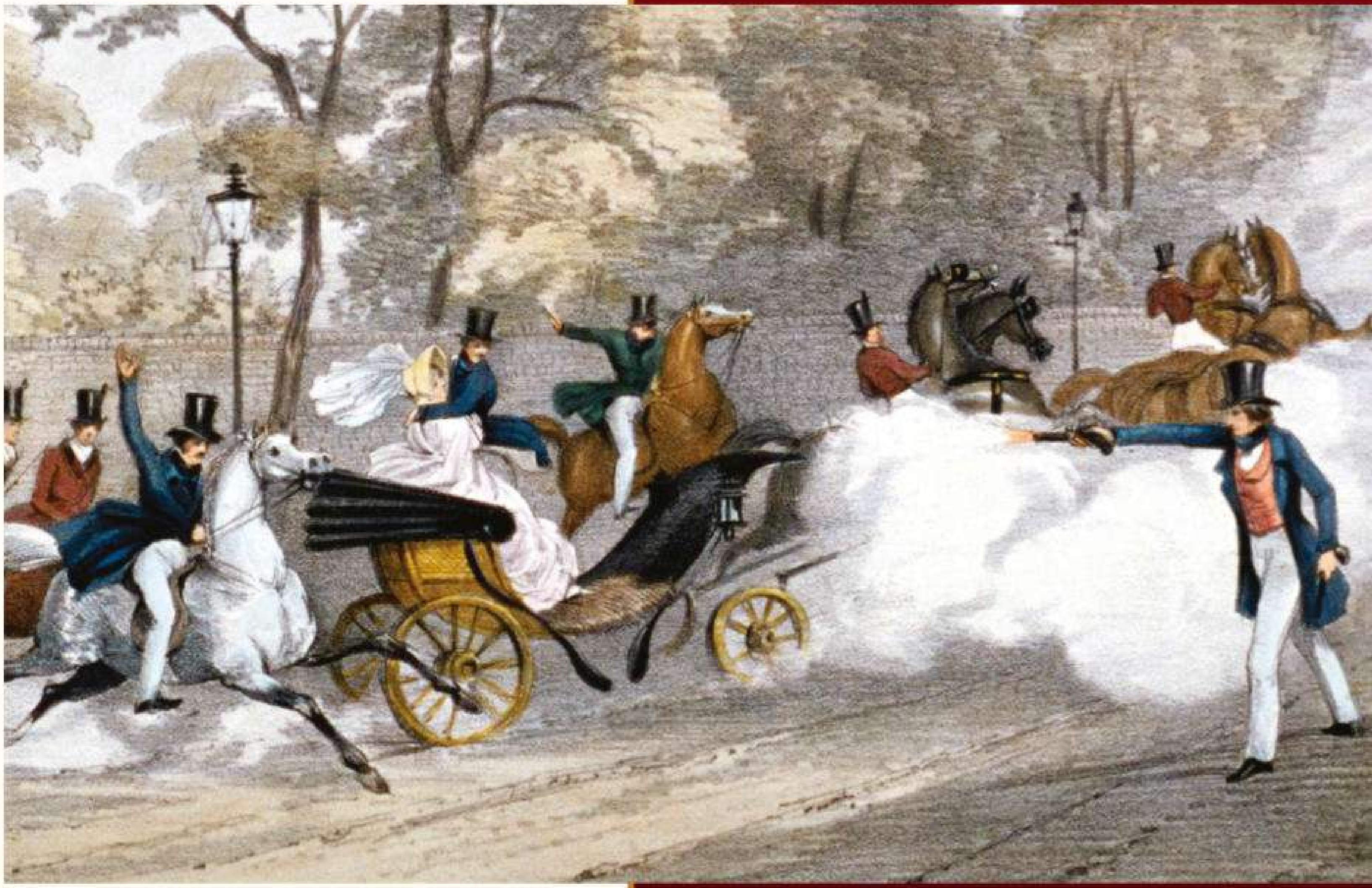
Though Albert became the queen's consort once he married Victoria, she did not grant him the title of prince consort until 1857, and his popularity with his bride was not mirrored in the reaction of the British public nor government. Regarded by some as a fortune hunter, Albert was considered a poor choice for a powerful monarch such as Victoria. His ancestral lands were small and impoverished and, worst of all, some members of his family were Roman Catholics. When the marriage was debated in parliament Albert was blocked from receiving a peerage and awarded a far smaller annual stipend than his predecessors. Members of the public were likewise suspicious of the incomer's motives and even at home, Albert found his authority undermined by the queen's confidante and former governess, Baroness Lehzen. In fact, he eventually had her removed from her position in order to finally put a stop to her influence once and for all. Albert was well aware of the strange situation he was in as husband to a queen, and often found himself seeking for a proper role. "I am only the husband," he reflected. "Not the master."

Victoria and Albert were deeply in love, though any mention of their sex life was



BELOW On 4 May 1840, Edward Oxford attempted to shoot Queen Victoria while she was on a carriage ride with Prince Albert. He missed and was quickly arrested

ABOVE-INSET Prince Albert wearing the orders of the Golden Fleece, Bath and Garter in a portrait from 1840



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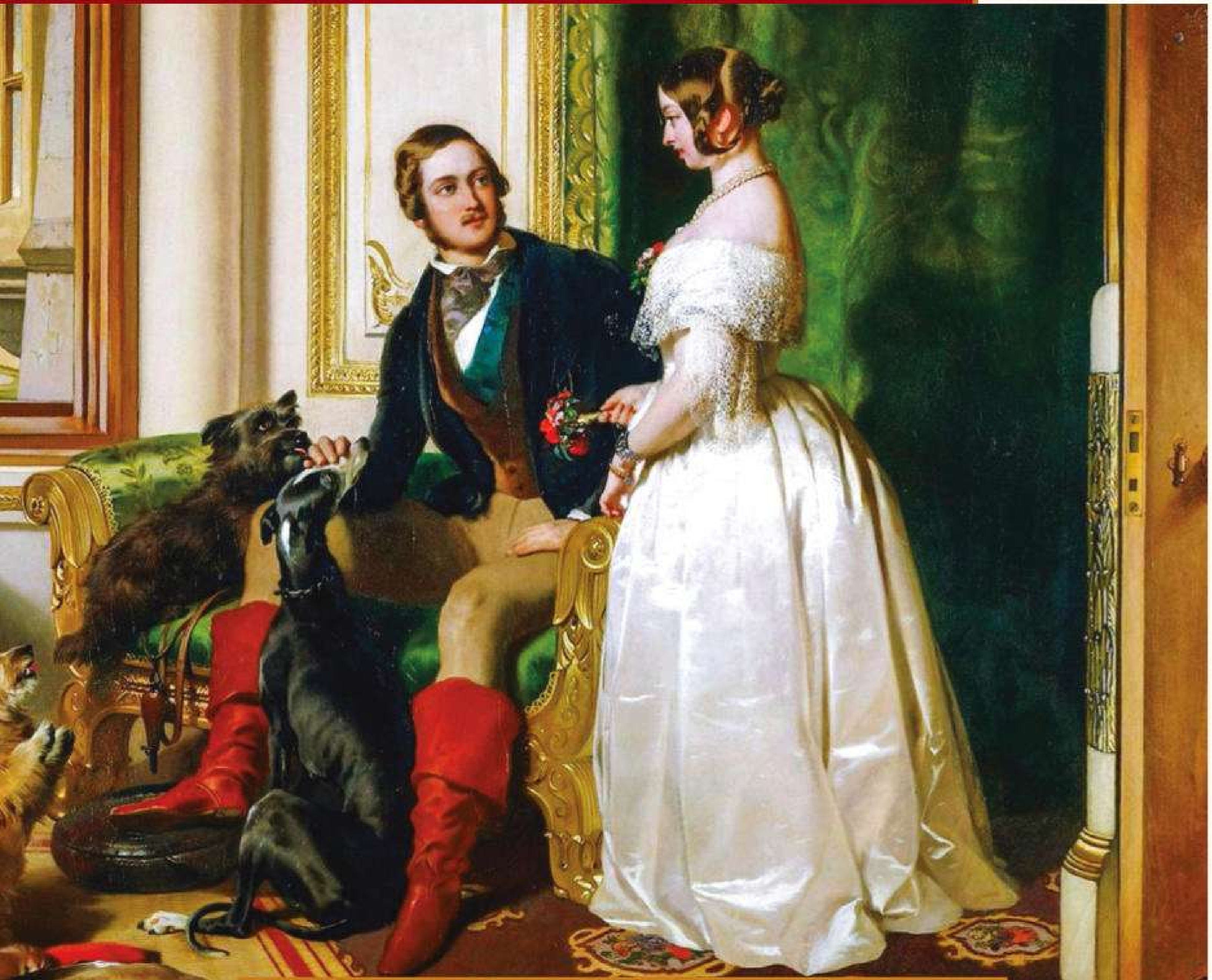
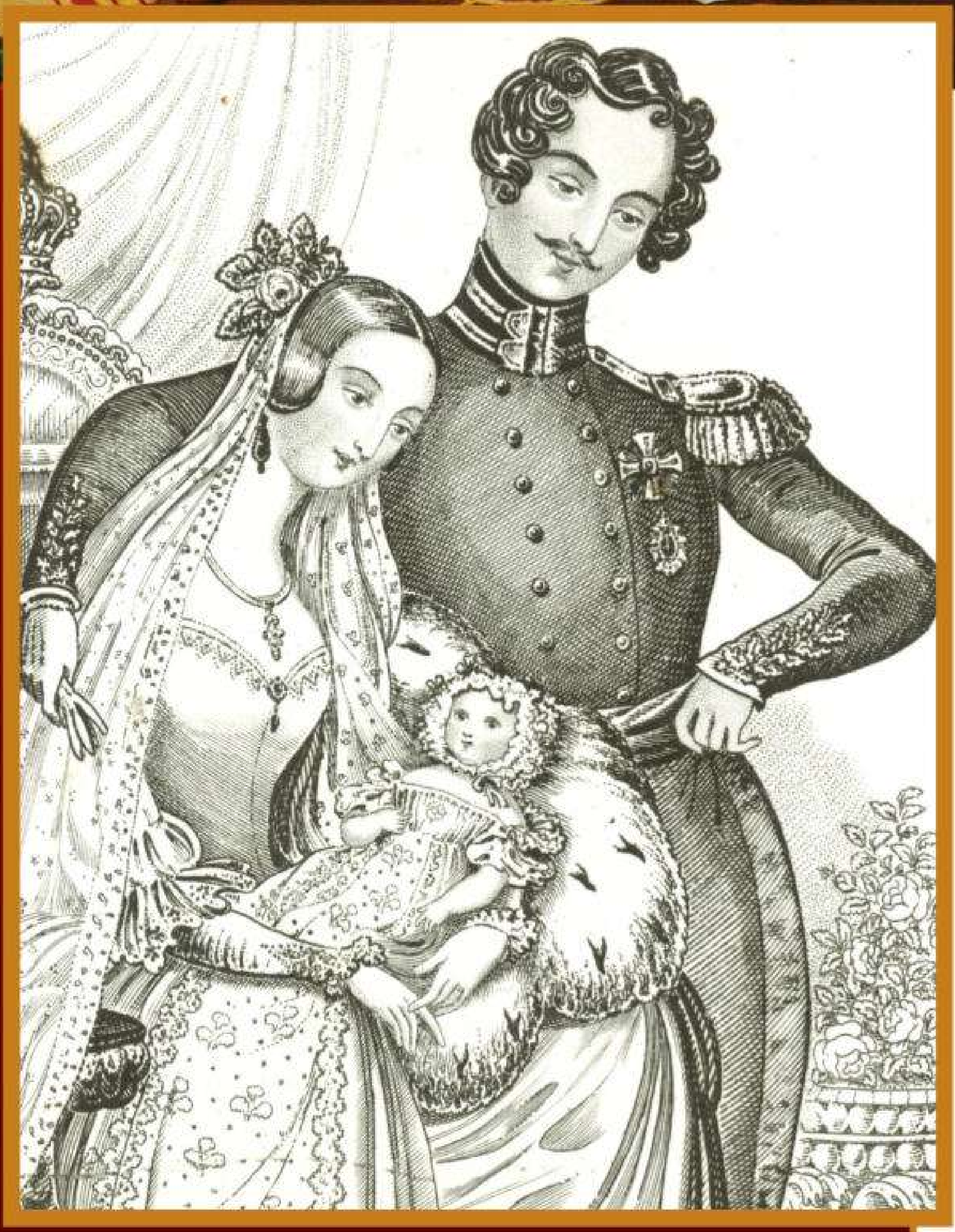




ABOVE The young royal family enjoying some time together at Windsor Castle, c.1841-43

LEFT An illustration of Victoria and Albert welcoming their first child, Princess Victoria, later Empress of Germany

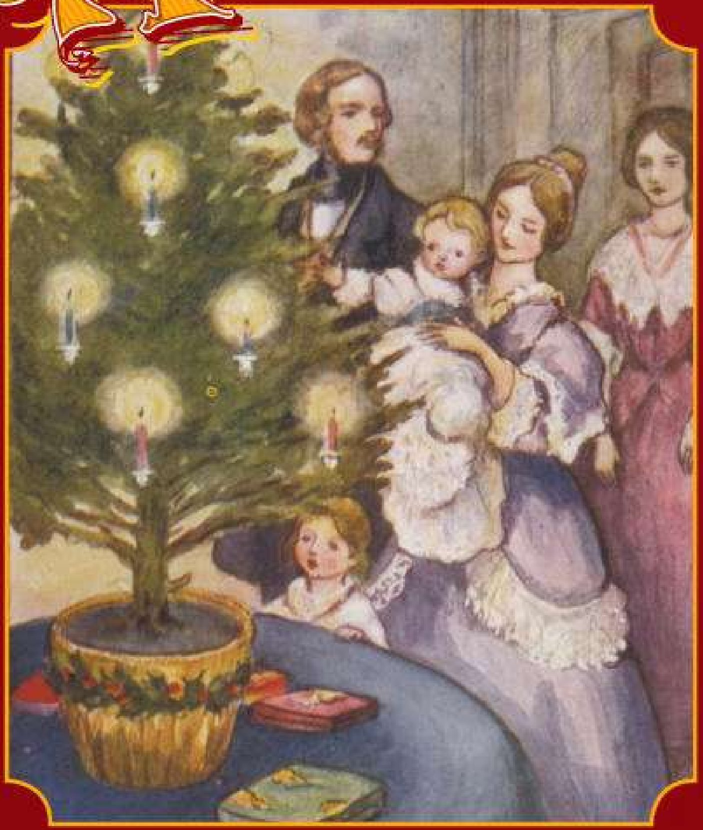
expurgated from the queen's journals by her daughter, and throughout their marriage they remained unquestionably faithful to one another. While those who knew them intimately spoke of a relaxed and loving couple, in public they appeared stiff and formal. Behind the scenes, by contrast, things could not be more different for the newlyweds. Of course, one unavoidable consequence of their unquenchable attraction was the fact that, within a couple of months of the wedding, Victoria was pregnant. The queen spent the first decade of her married life either pregnant or recovering from a birth, and she delivered seven of her nine children during that period. As she concentrated on motherhood, Albert assumed control of the royal household and many of her sovereign duties. Unlike the Duchess of Kent and her ambitious cronies, Albert proved to be a wise and sensible advisor to his wife. At the birth of their first child, Victoria asked Albert to stand in for her at meetings with her ministers and entrusted him with the responsibility of her correspondence as he served as her private secretary. Though not a king in name, he certainly served as one behind the scenes.

There was a curious dichotomy and imbalance in the marriage between Victoria and Albert. On the one hand she was queen, her position elevated far above that of her husband. On the other she was a Victorian wife, and determined to serve as such at home. Though the public frowned on his meddling in politics and the affairs of the country early in their marriage, Victoria never doubted her husband's abilities whether as prince consort, father or husband.

Albert's unwavering support for his wife was the starting point for the public's reevaluation of the prince. It also allowed him to develop some sort of role for himself, which he had previously struggled to define. As he grew in influence behind the scenes, he began to take on more of a public role too, which offered his wife's subjects a chance to see something of him beyond the husband who stood in the shadow of the queen. The breakthrough came in June 1840, when the couple were shot at by Edward Oxford, a would-be assassin. Albert's immediate instinct was to protect his wife and his cool courage finally won the hearts of the people. Perhaps the most obvious evidence of the change in Albert's reception can be seen in the fact that Parliament passed a Regency Act in that same year that guaranteed he would serve as regent in the event of his wife's early death.

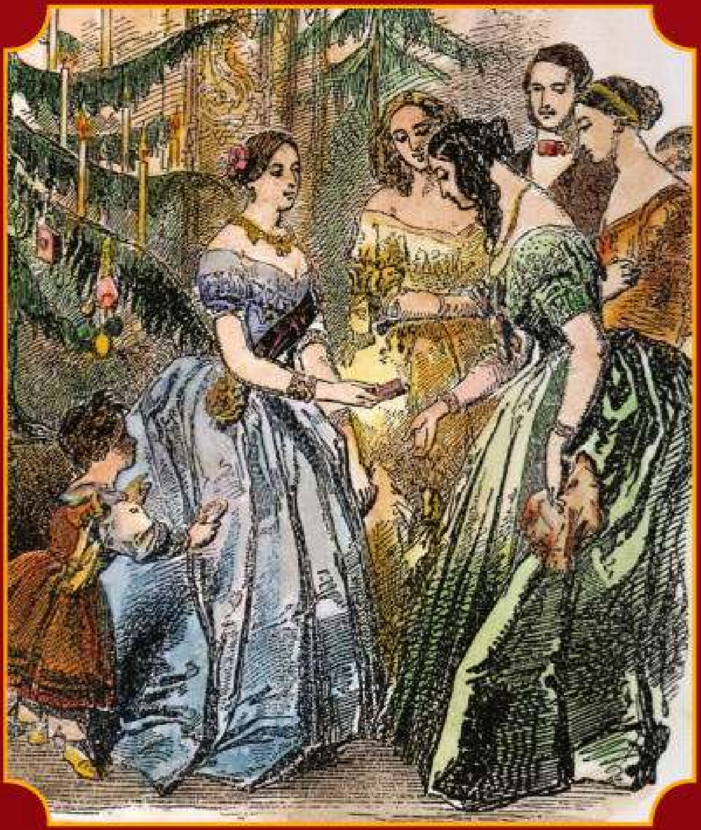
A ROYAL CHRISTMAS

How Victoria and Albert marked the festive season



Christmas Tree

A popular 1848 engraving of Victoria and Albert decorating a Christmas may well have helped to popularise the tradition, originally from Germany, in Britain, but they weren't the first royals to do it. Victoria's mother had started doing the same from 1800. Still, the new royal family kept it up and insisted on decorating their Christmas tree themselves.

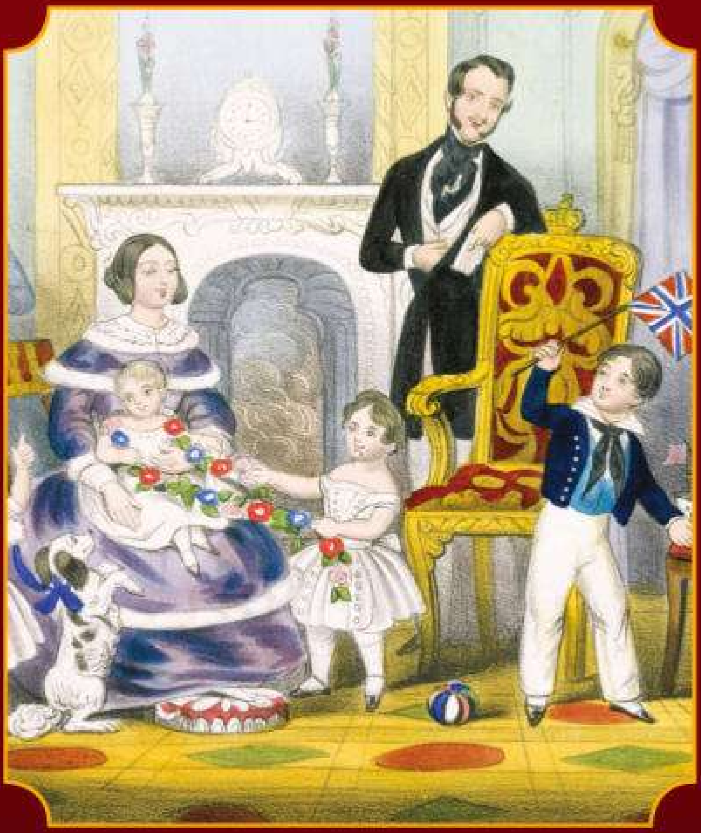


Gift giving

Victoria and Albert would give elaborate gifts of jewellery and art to each other, while the children (and later grandchildren) would often make gifts for the queen and consort. This would be done on Christmas Eve, which was a shift from earlier traditions when gift-giving was more common for New Year. Gifts wouldn't be wrapped, though, as that emerged later in the 19th century.

A big Christmas meal

A big family dinner was also common for Victoria on Christmas day with turkey a possibility, but roast beef was apparently the favourite for the royals. For other families in Britain, a goose might also have been more likely than turkey. Royal Christmas meals could be quite elaborate with multiple courses, sometimes up to 20 dishes, and rich desserts to finish.



The family together

Victoria and Albert embodied another important shift for Christmas celebrations in this era: having the whole family together. This wasn't necessarily the case in previous years, but with improved transport links and railways, having large family Christmas gatherings became more plausible. After Albert's passing, Victoria kept these traditions going for her family.

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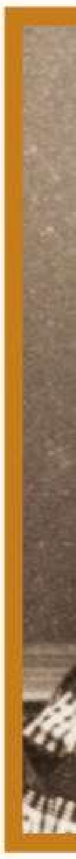
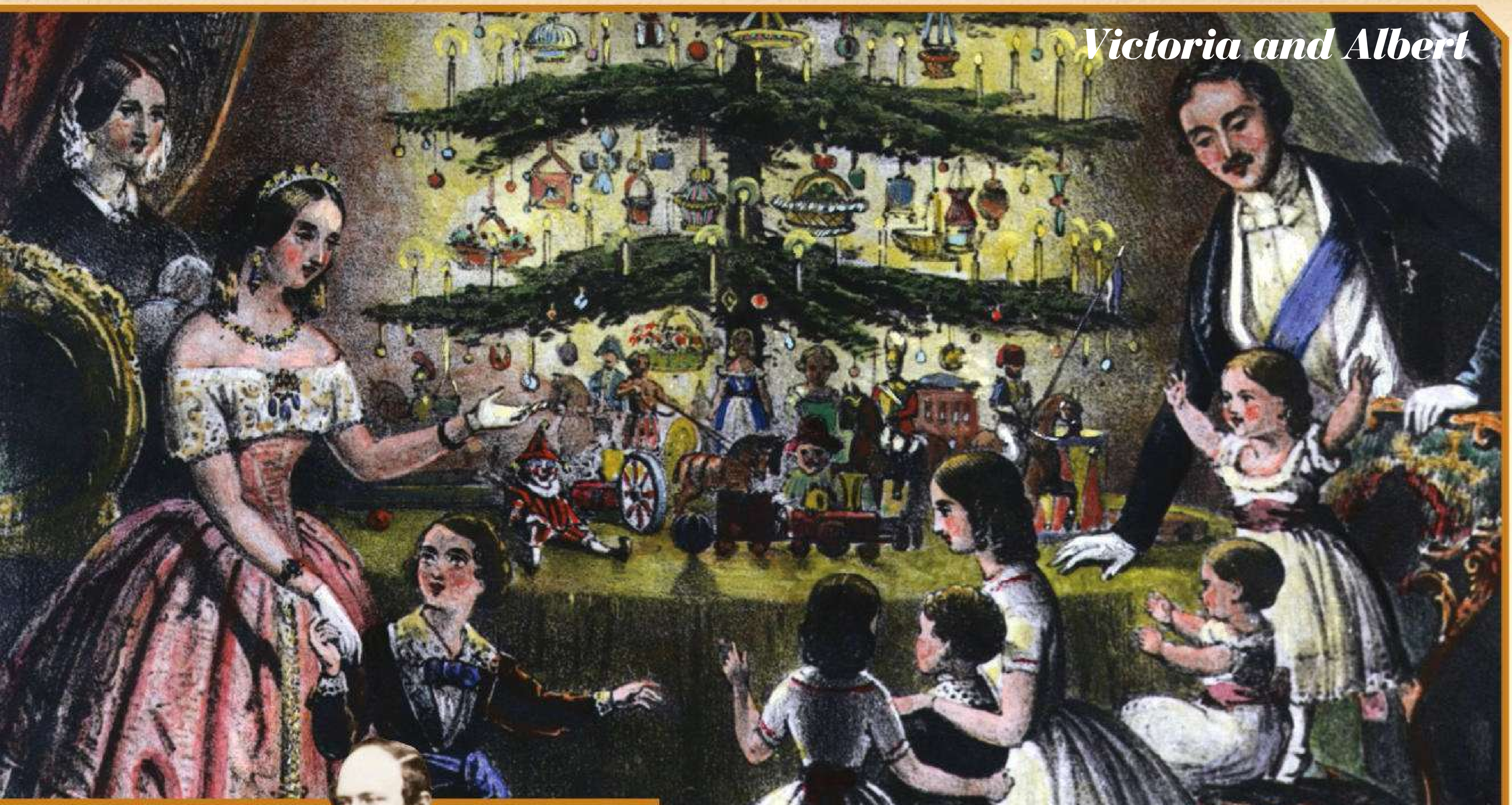
As Albert grew in confidence and influence, he developed his own political and philanthropic views too, often championing causes that would help the poorest people in society. When he became the driving force behind the Great Exhibition in 1851 he presided over one of the greatest spectacles of the era, sealing his reputation as a man who knew what people wanted. Albert was a reformer at heart and followed developments in science, technology (he and Victoria shared an enthusiasm for photography) and social care. He didn't limit his interests to those outside the home, though, and took a very keen interest in the upbringing of his children too. In fact, his enlightened approach to childcare almost certainly contributed to the fact that all nine of the couple's children survived to adulthood, a remarkable achievement in the era even for a royal family.

For a less strong-minded woman, it would have been easier to simply hand over the reins and settle into a backseat and motherhood, but Victoria was not about to do any such thing. Though she was happy to follow Albert's lead and enter into a quiet domestic life away from London, Victoria was also an engaged and political ruler. Yet her mental health was sometimes perilous thanks to what appears to have been postnatal depression and Albert, usually so attentive and watchful when it came to his wife, found it difficult to cope with Victoria's symptoms. She disliked being pregnant and giving birth, and with each pregnancy her symptoms worsened. By the 1850s she was subject to violent mood swings and terrifying tempers, which Albert would withdraw from. Eventually the queen's doctors theorised that she may have inherited the same madness that had plagued George III, and warned Albert not to try and communicate with her during these periods. Instead, he took to sliding notes under her door, while Victoria began to record her outbursts in a notebook

> "ALBERT'S DEATH ROBBED QUEEN VICTORIA OF THE ONLY MAN SHE HAD EVER LOVED OR WISHED TO LOVE"





TOP The royal family gathered around a Christmas tree in Windsor Castle

ABOVE Victoria and Albert photographed together in 1860

LEFT Queen Victoria pictured in mourning following the death of Prince Albert

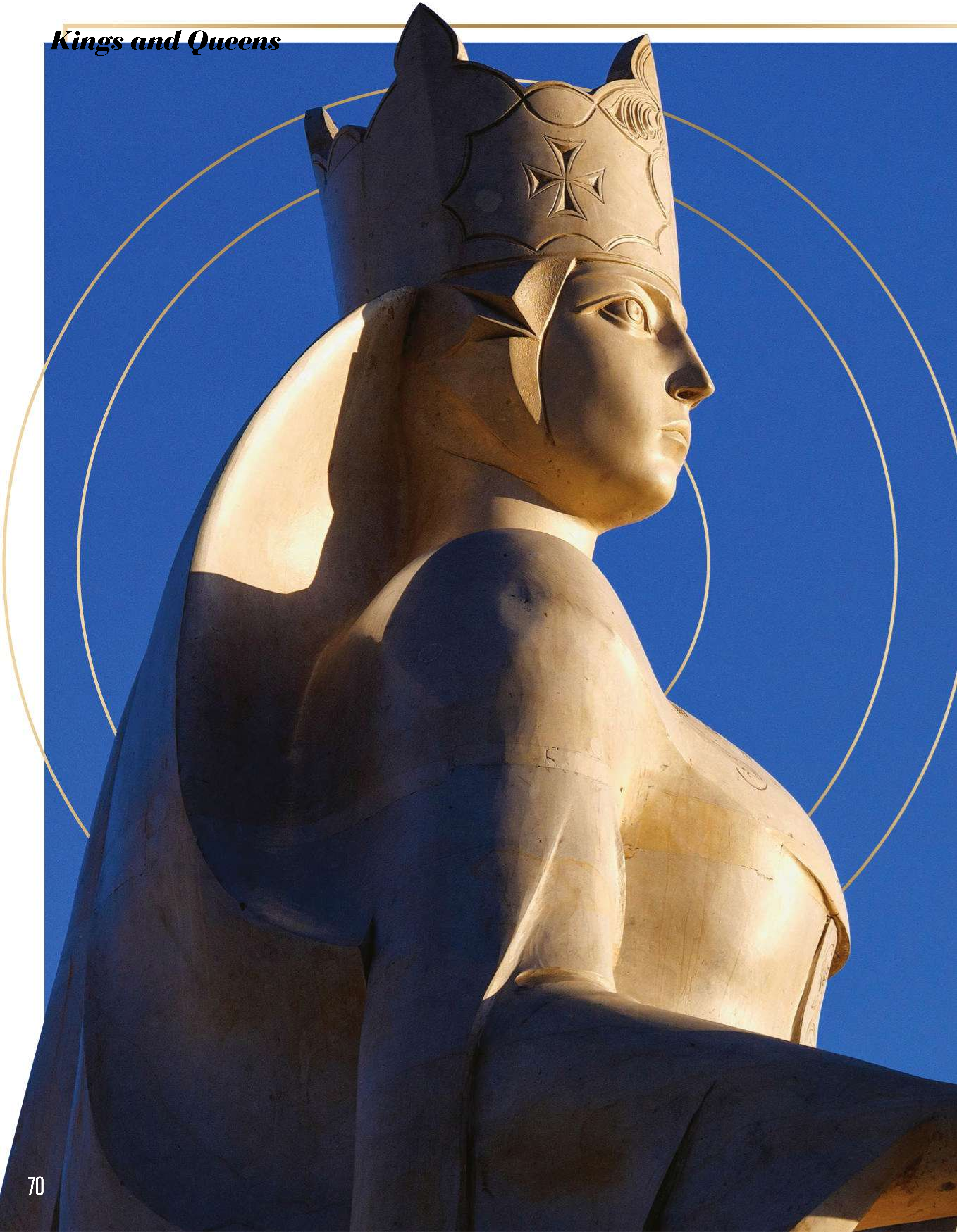
alongside an apology, which Albert would read later. It may sound odd, but the queen took real comfort in these exchanges and looked to her husband for validation that she was improving with each passing day.

During the early years of their marriage Victoria and Albert found sanctuary in their beloved Isle of Wight home, Osborne House. They had been able to purchase it in 1844 thanks to Albert's careful management of the royal finances, and it was where they could really be a family. A few years later Albert took on the lease of Balmoral, which became the place they loved above any other, and remains a favourite of the royal family to this day.

As the years passed and their earlier passion settled into the more relaxed patterns of a long marriage, Victoria and Albert remained one another's strongest champions. As in any relationship there were tensions, but they were always resolved in the end. Though Albert never found it easy to deal with Victoria's tempers and mood swings, he had long since learned to weather the storm, and when she suffered the most he was always on hand to ease the burden of her sovereign responsibilities. They presented a united front on nearly all things, including their disapproval at rumours that the prince of Wales, their eldest son, had been consorting with an actress. Victoria was driven to distraction by the gossip and Albert travelled to Cambridge to have the matter out with the prince.

Soon after he returned from Cambridge, Albert fell ill. He was diagnosed with typhoid fever and died within weeks. His death robbed Queen Victoria of the only man she had ever loved or wished to love. The Widow of Windsor, as she became known, entered a state of mourning that persisted for the rest of her life. It is this Victoria that has become the image of the queen in the public consciousness. For the rest of her days she had Albert's rooms left just as they were on the day he died, with fresh linen and towels laid out daily, and a basin of hot water provided for him each morning. When she died, she was buried with Albert's dressing gown and had a plaster cast of his hand placed in her coffin.

Yet Albert's death and the queen's devotion to mourning him is merely one aspect of the celebrated marriage of Victoria and Albert. Before the shadow of the Widow of Windsor there was a love story, a family and a couple who changed the country and the royal family forever. ○



Tamar the Great

Georgia's Golden Queen

How the legendary monarch advanced the gilded age of medieval Georgia

Written by Emily Staniforth

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From the 11th to the 13th century, Georgia experienced a Golden Age: a period of time where Georgian power was at its highest and art and culture flourished. As the territories of the state were expanded, one woman stood at the country's head. Queen Tamar (c.1160 – c.1213) was the most notable monarch of this era as she led Georgia's transformation during the peak of its strength and influence. This much-loved queen has since remained a symbol of Georgian pride in the centuries following her death.

A queen is born

Tamar's route to the throne was unusual, particularly as a woman in the Middle Ages. Though her exact date of birth is unknown, historians believe she was born sometime between 1160 and 1165, the daughter of King George III and his wife Queen Burdukhan. A member of the prestigious Bagrationi Dynasty, George had faced opposition to his leadership from factions who claimed his nephew was, in fact, the rightful ruler of Georgia. After successfully quashing the revolutionary forces, George decided he needed to make his rule and

King or Queen?

Why is Tamar sometimes referred to as a Georgian king?

Many sources refer to Tamar as a king of Georgia rather than a queen. While this might seem confusing, it is simply due to the fact that in the Georgian language there was no word for a queen regnant. Tamar was thus described as a 'mepe' (king) rather than a 'dedopali' (queen), which was the title given to the queen consorts of the kings who came before her. As Tamar was the sole ruler, the title of 'mepe' is often translated literally and so she becomes King Tamar.

Tamar was not the first female ruler to be given the title of king. In Ancient Egypt, Hatshepsut was technically a king as she assumed the male roles that came with the title of pharaoh. Polish monarch Jadwiga was crowned as 'king' in 1384 in an effort to emphasise her sole authority over her domain. In the early 16th century, Queen Mary became the ruler of Hungary and Croatia, but was technically crowned as a 'king'. It is possible that, like these other examples of female 'kingship', by ruling as King Tamar the Georgian monarch could more firmly establish her position as head of state.

succession as secure as possible, especially since he did not have any sons who would be the heirs to the throne. With Tamar being the eldest of his daughters, he made the decision to declare her as his successor. However, to ensure Tamar was established as a figure of authority and to try and diminish any threat of uprising against her, George crowned his daughter as his co-ruler in 1178 in front of an audience of the Georgian royalty, nobility and clergy. The aim was to educate and train Tamar as a monarch while giving her the prestige and authority that came with being a ruler in name at her father's side. Tamar and her father ruled side by side for six years before his death in 1184. It was then that George's plan was put to the test.

The beginning of Tamar's rule was tumultuous to say the least. According to historian Filippo Donvito: "Very few thought she would survive her first year as queen." Despite having been declared monarch by her father in 1178, the Georgian aristocracy insisted that Tamar be recrowned after George's death. She had a few influential allies at the Georgian court, with her aunt Rusudan (George's sister) being particularly important to securing her queenship. Rusudan herself was a skilled politician and a dominant presence at court, and as the widow of a sultan and the wife of a shah, she was experienced in handling herself as a woman in a position of power. For Tamar, her support was invaluable. However, Tamar needed more than just her powerful aunt and a few members of the aristocracy to consolidate her throne. Ideally, she needed to keep the clergy of the Georgian Orthodox Church on side, which meant gaining the approval of their head, the Catholicos Patriarch Mikel Mirianisdze.

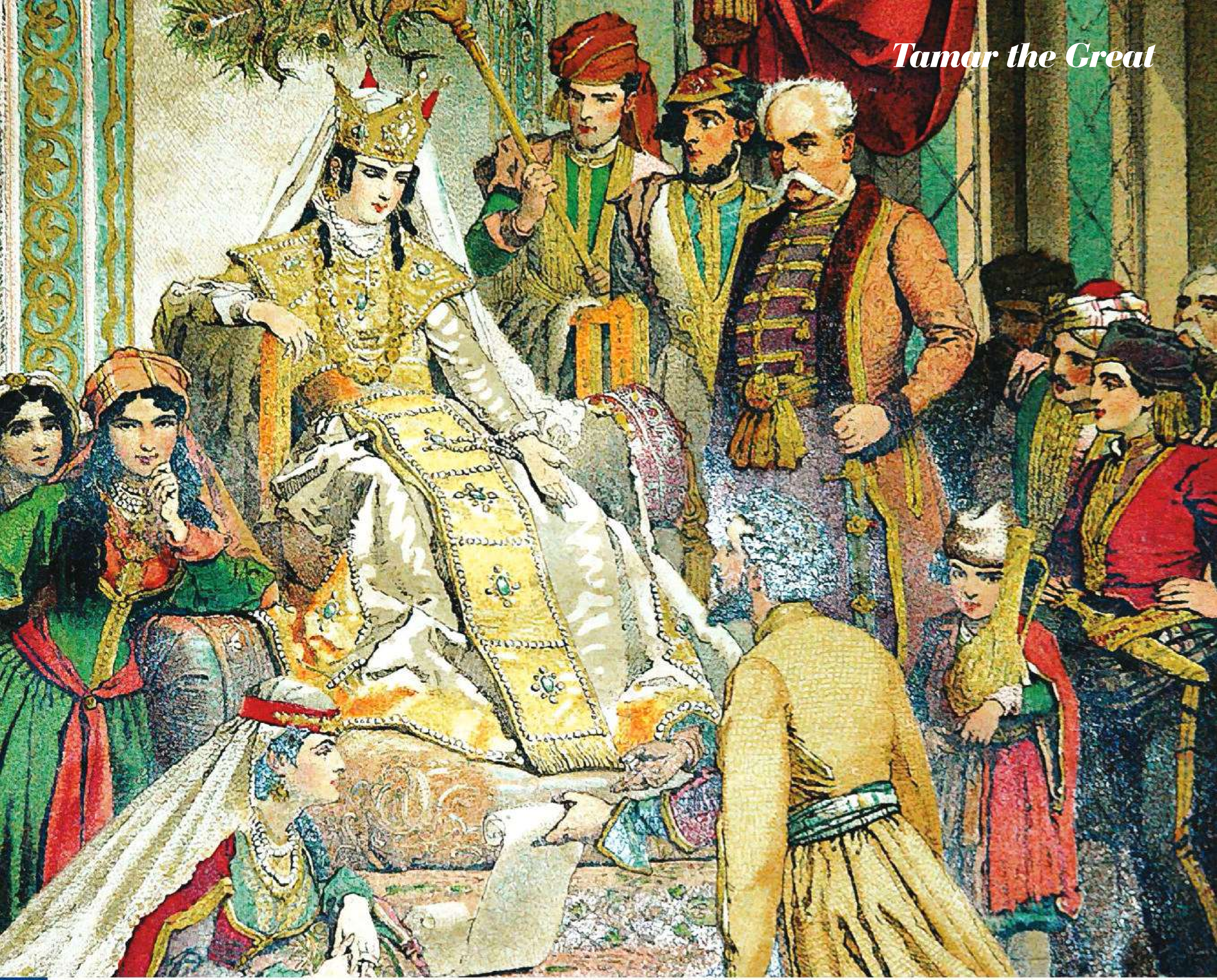
Mirianisdze understood that as a young, female ruler, Queen Tamar needed his patronage to succeed in her role. He therefore made a deal with her: he would support her as monarch if she made him a chancellor. Tamar agreed in an attempt to regain the influence she had lost with the death of her father. However, Mirianisdze was a powerful man and Tamar soon realised that it would be better to reduce his influence rather than expand it. Convening a synod of the clergy in 1185, Tamar hoped to oust him. Unfortunately, she was unsuccessful in limiting his power as the synod only decided to do away with a few of the less important bishops who also opposed Tamar's rule. Realising she could not resist the demands of the aristocracy without facing their wrath, Tamar submitted to being recrowned. However, their next demand pushed the queen too far. Requesting that the nobles make up a political body that could enact laws and appoint officials, they effectively wanted to reduce Tamar's authority to such an extent that she became merely an ornamental figurehead of an aristocratic government with no real power or influence. Tamar stood her ground and ordered the arrest of Qutlu Arslan, a leading aristocrat, and as a result the nobility acquiesced after seeing that Tamar would not be cowed. She had eventually established herself as a capable and secure queen, and had displayed to her subjects that she possessed the strength with which to lead the nation.

Finding a consort

Tamar's next challenge lay in her quest to find herself a suitable consort: a husband who would prove to be an asset to her queenship, and Georgia as a whole, while avoiding ambitious men who wished to use her to enhance their own status. Yuri Andreyevich Bogolyubsky, a Rus prince who had been exiled from his kingdom of Novgorod after his father was murdered in a coup, was suggested by the nobility. This choice was also championed by Mirianisdze and Tamar's much-respected aunt Rusudan, giving the queen little choice but to accept Bogolyubsky as her husband and consort. Bogolyubsky seems to have been a popular choice among the nobility and clergy alike because not only did he ascribe to a Christian

RIGHT The poet Shota Rustaveli presents his work to Queen Tamar

BELOW Mural in the Church of Dormition, Vardzia, showing Tamar alongside her father George III



"Unfortunately for Tamar, her troublesome first husband proved to be a thorn in her side"

Orthodox faith, but also because choosing a foreigner rather than a Georgian avoided creating tension between the different Georgian factions, who all had their own candidates in mind.

After marrying in 1185, he showcased his ability as a military commander when he successfully led Georgian forces in neighbouring Armenia. However, his loathsome personality and behaviour proved to be difficult for Tamar to accept. The Rus prince proved to be a disastrous match for the driven queen, with her accusing him of being drunk most of the time. She also allegedly accused him of sodomy, while he, according to Donvito, accused Tamar of being infertile. It was clear that the marriage was not working, and so, much to Tamar's relief, the union was annulled in 1187. Bogolyubsky was exiled to Constantinople and Tamar was free to find a more suitable husband.

Around the time of her divorce, Mirianisdze died. These events marked a major turning point in Tamar's reign as she was finally more able to make her own decisions. She installed a new chancellor of her own choosing to replace Mirianisdze and also gave political positions to her allies at court. She subsequently found a new husband in David Soslan, an Ossetian prince. Ossetia was located near Georgia in the Caucasus Mountains, and although choosing another husband from outside of Georgia may have seemed like an odd choice, Soslan had actually been brought up at the Georgian court at Tbilisi. The pair would likely have been aware of each other for most of their lives, and seemingly this provided a good foundation for their marriage. Furthermore, Soslan was a skilled military leader whose allegiance and devotion would prove to be advantageous for Tamar and her ambitious plans to expand the Georgian realm. Their more equal and loving partnership saw the birth of two children, son George and daughter Rusudan, putting to bed the rumours of infertility started by Tamar's first husband.

Tamar at war

Unfortunately for Tamar, the troublesome Bogolyubsky proved to be a thorn in her side as he raised rebel forces to oust the queen. The revolutionary forces, consisting of Bogolyubsky and some of his Georgian

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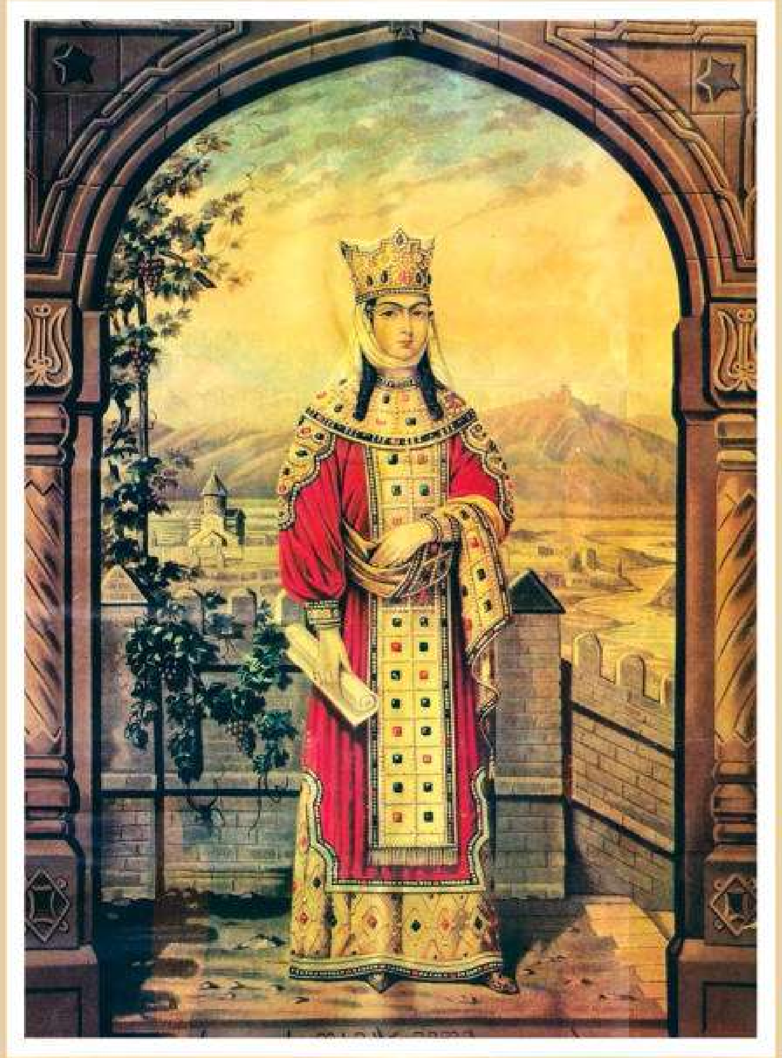


ABOVE-LEFT A portrait of Queen Tamar dating to the 19th century

ABOVE-RIGHT The cave city of Vardzia as it looks today

supporters, convened in 1191 in an attempt to take Georgia by force. However, Tamar's intelligence network kept her abreast of the rebels' plans and the armies were easily vanquished by her own capable army. The irksome Bogolyubsky was sent back to Constantinople, while his rebel allies were looked upon with mercy by Tamar, who could easily have had them executed. The disgraced noble participants of the uprising were dispossessed of their political titles and replaced with other men who had proven their allegiance to Tamar and her administration.

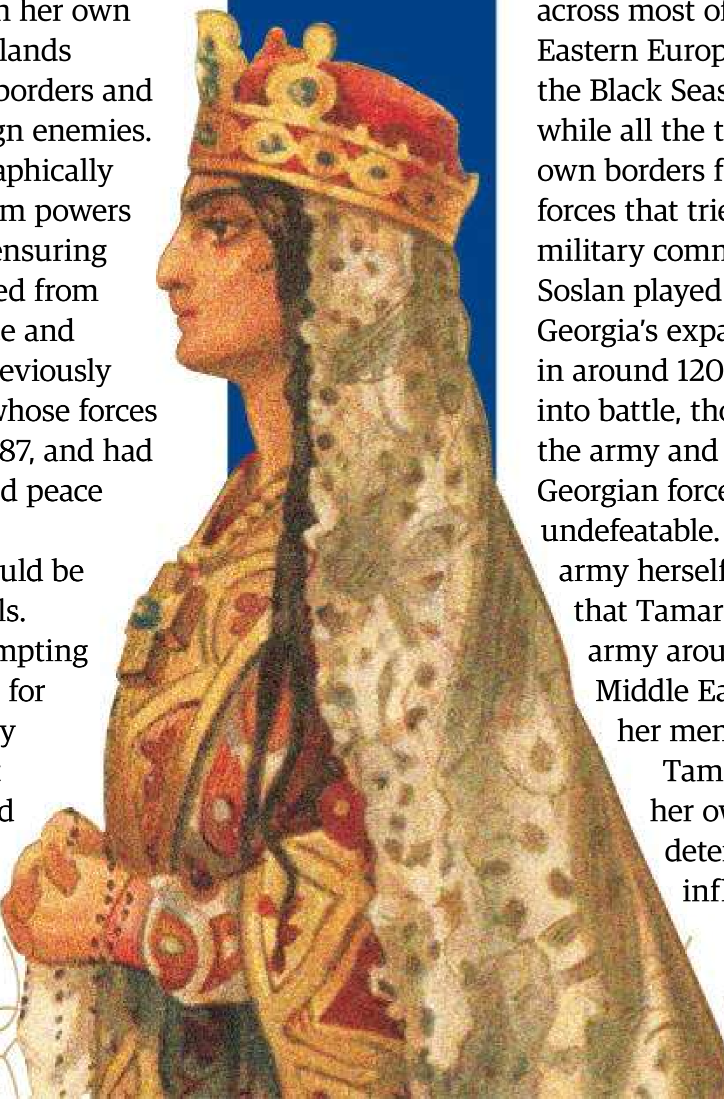
With Soslan at her side and Bogolyubsky's revolutionary efforts quashed, Tamar embarked on her own personal crusade to conquer lands around Georgia, expand her borders and defend her nation from foreign enemies. Orthodox Georgia was geographically somewhat enclosed by Muslim powers by 1192, so Tamar set about ensuring that her country was protected from encroaching outside influence and possible invasion. She had previously made contact with Saladin, whose forces had captured Jerusalem in 1187, and had negotiated a deal that ensured peace between the two leaders.

However, not all threats could be extinguished with peace deals. Muslim forces had been attempting to make inroads into Georgia for years, but none had been very successful. To guarantee that Georgia would not be invaded on a larger scale, Tamar decided to strike back, and in 1193 an army headed by Soslan marched into Arran (now modern-day Azerbaijan) as a show of force against Georgia's troublesome neighbour. This marked the start of a series of campaigns that would see Georgian conquest across most of the Caucasus (the area in Eastern Europe between the Caspian and the Black Seas), into modern-day Iran, while all the time defending Georgia's own borders from the powerful Muslim forces that tried to take their territory. As military commander and Tamar's consort, Soslan played a vital role in many of Georgia's expansion efforts until his death in around 1207. Tamar herself did not go into battle, though her reforms within the army and strategic direction ensured Georgian forces were, more often than not, undefeatable. Despite not heading up the army herself, there is some suggestion that Tamar may have travelled with her army around Eastern Europe and the Middle East, acting as a figurehead for her men.

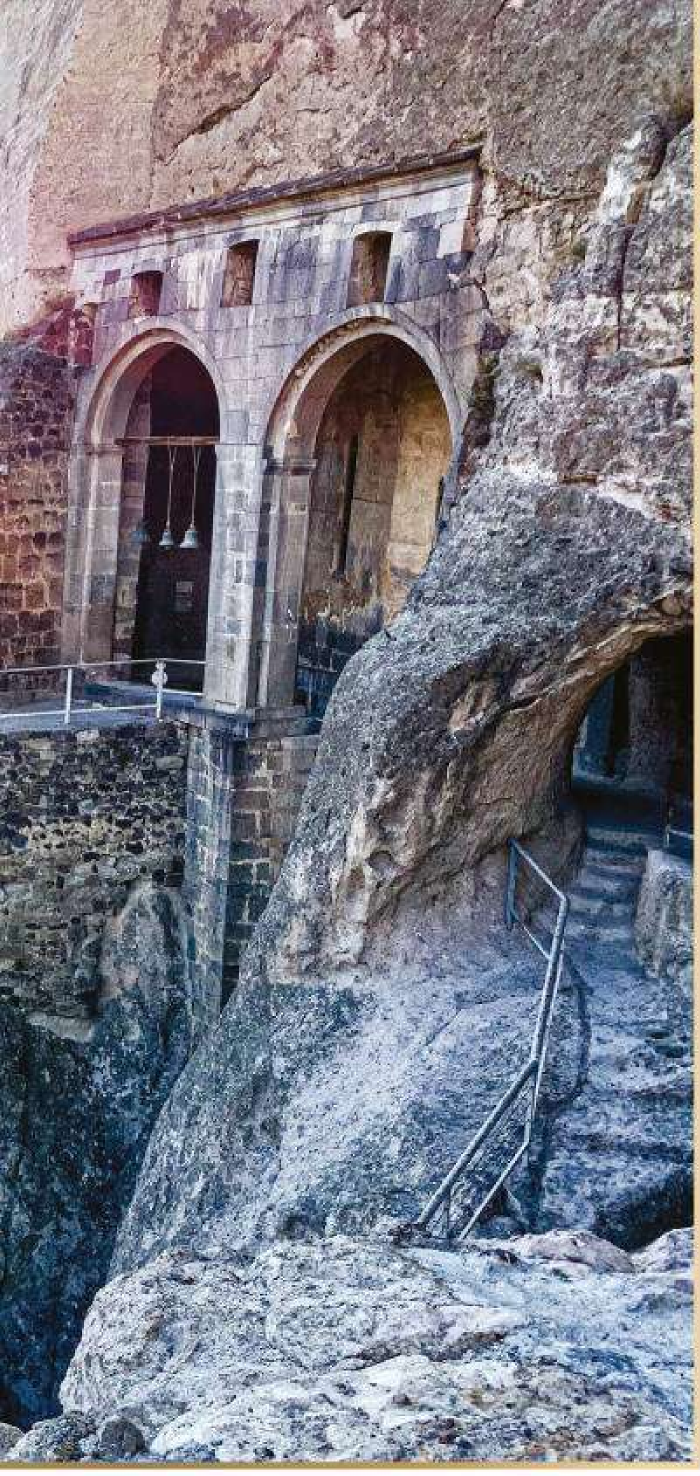
Tamar not only had plans for her own realm, but she was also determined to help expand the influence of her family in other parts of the world. Her younger sister Rusudan had found a matrimonial match in the son of the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos I. In 1185, Andronikos was murdered in Constantinople and his family were all killed except for his two grandsons: the children of Rusudan. The boys, Alexios and David, were sent to Georgia where their aunt Tamar provided them with sanctuary at her court.

By around 1204, the Byzantine Empire had begun to collapse and so Tamar exploited the opportunity and provided her now-adult nephews with forces to take back the land that she believed rightfully belonged to them. Successful in their endeavours, Alexios and David first took the port of Trebizond (in present-day Turkey) and established it as their centre. Alexios declared himself emperor and the brothers set about expanding their influence along the coast of the Black Sea. Though Tamar did not directly control the new Trebizond Empire, the close familial link between her nephews' lands and Georgia remained strong, expanding Tamar's sphere of influence even further across Europe and the Middle East.

> "Tamar's queenship oversaw a cultural renaissance in Georgia"



BELOW A 19th century depiction of Saint Tamar



A Georgian renaissance

Alongside her political ambitions, and despite the violence and political turmoil of her reign, Tamar's queenship oversaw a cultural renaissance in Georgia. As an intelligent woman herself, Tamar acted as a patron for the arts and poetry in particular flourished, with great Georgian writers like Shota Rustaveli, Ioane Shavteli and Chakhrukhadze taking literary inspiration from their golden queen and her warrior husband.

Architecture proved to be a particular passion of Tamar's as she facilitated the building of several churches across Georgia. One of her especially impressive projects can still be seen today in the monastery at Vardzia, which was carved into Mount Erusheti. Tamar's vision was to create an underground city that would provide a sanctuary for her people in times of turbulence and war. The cave town of Vardzia could house 50,000 people and existed on 13 levels within the mountain itself. The underground labyrinth served as a haven for the Georgian people, but also possibly for Tamar herself when she accompanied her army as they fought the Seljuk Turks. It is said that Tamar may have used the site at Vardzia to pray for her husband's victory in battle.

Tamar's desire to provide for her people, seen in the construction of the Vardzia fortress, permeated her reign. Under her queenship, Georgia prospered economically and wealth was shared between all. Tamar also proved to be an empathetic leader as she supposedly repealed harsh policies that allowed the use of torture and execution.

Death and legacy

It is believed that Tamar died some time around 1213 and her crown passed to her son, who became King George IV. With her death, Georgia's Golden Age also came to an end as George proved to be a less capable monarch than his mother and the kings before her. Vanquishing threats from the Mongols pre-occupied Georgia after Tamar's demise and the strong kingdom she had created subsided. However, her legacy lived on in the memory of the Georgian people and several centuries later she was canonised by the Georgian Orthodox Church. Saint Tamar continues to stand in Georgia as a symbol of hope for the return of the nation's medieval prosperity.

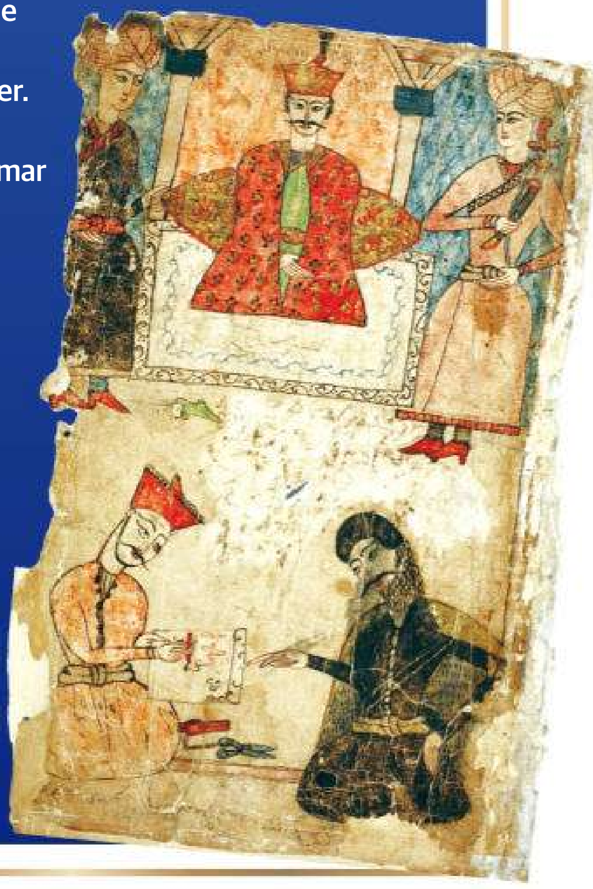
While Tamar's place of burial remains undiscovered, there are several theories as to where she lies. Some believe that her remains are buried in the Gelati Monastery, while others believe that her ashes were transported to Jerusalem after her death. However, one myth states that, much like England's King Arthur, Queen Tamar lies asleep in a cave in the Caucasus Mountains, waiting for the time when she will awaken and bring forth a new Golden Age for Georgia.

The Knight in the Panther's Skin

The epic poem that idolised Queen Tamar

One of the most famous works of poetry associated with Queen Tamar was written by the acclaimed Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli. *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* was possibly commissioned by Tamar, and tells the story of two friends, Avtandil and Tariel, who set out on a quest to find their much-beloved Nestan-Darejan. While the poem is fictional and set outside of Georgia, the tale is allegorical and is a thinly veiled ode to Tamar: in the poem Nestan-Darejan is said to represent the Georgian queen. Rustaveli also uses the poem to praise Tamar's second husband, David Soslan, highlighting how pleased the Georgian people were with the queen's choice of partner. Rustaveli himself may have been personally close to Tamar as there are some sources that suggest he served as a treasurer in her court.

The poem has been translated into several languages since the late 12th or early 13th century in which it was written. It's considered by many to be the finest Georgian epic, and it continues to serve as the embodiment of the cultural renaissance that occurred in Georgia under Tamar's rule.



Gelati Monastery, where Queen Tamar's remains may be buried

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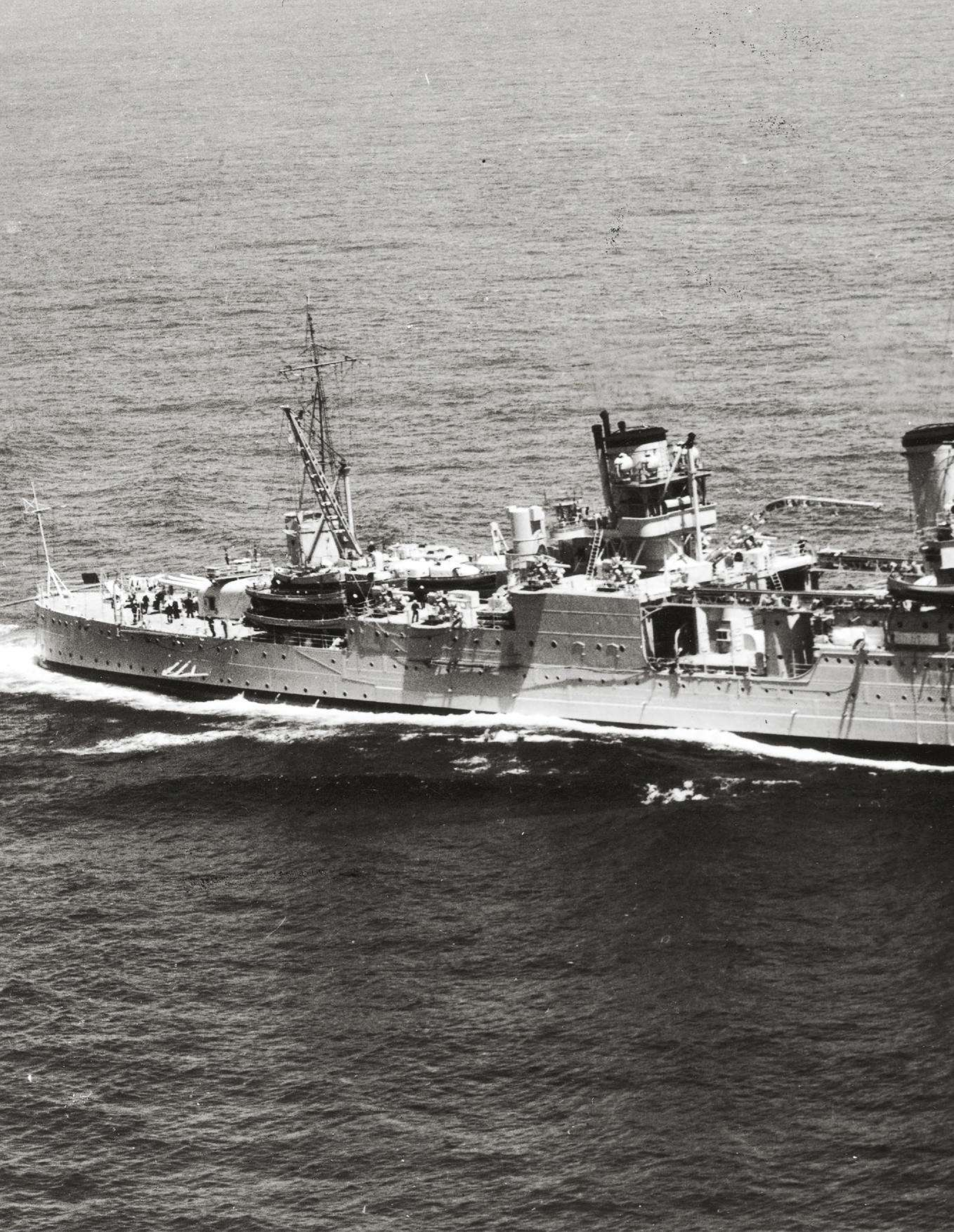
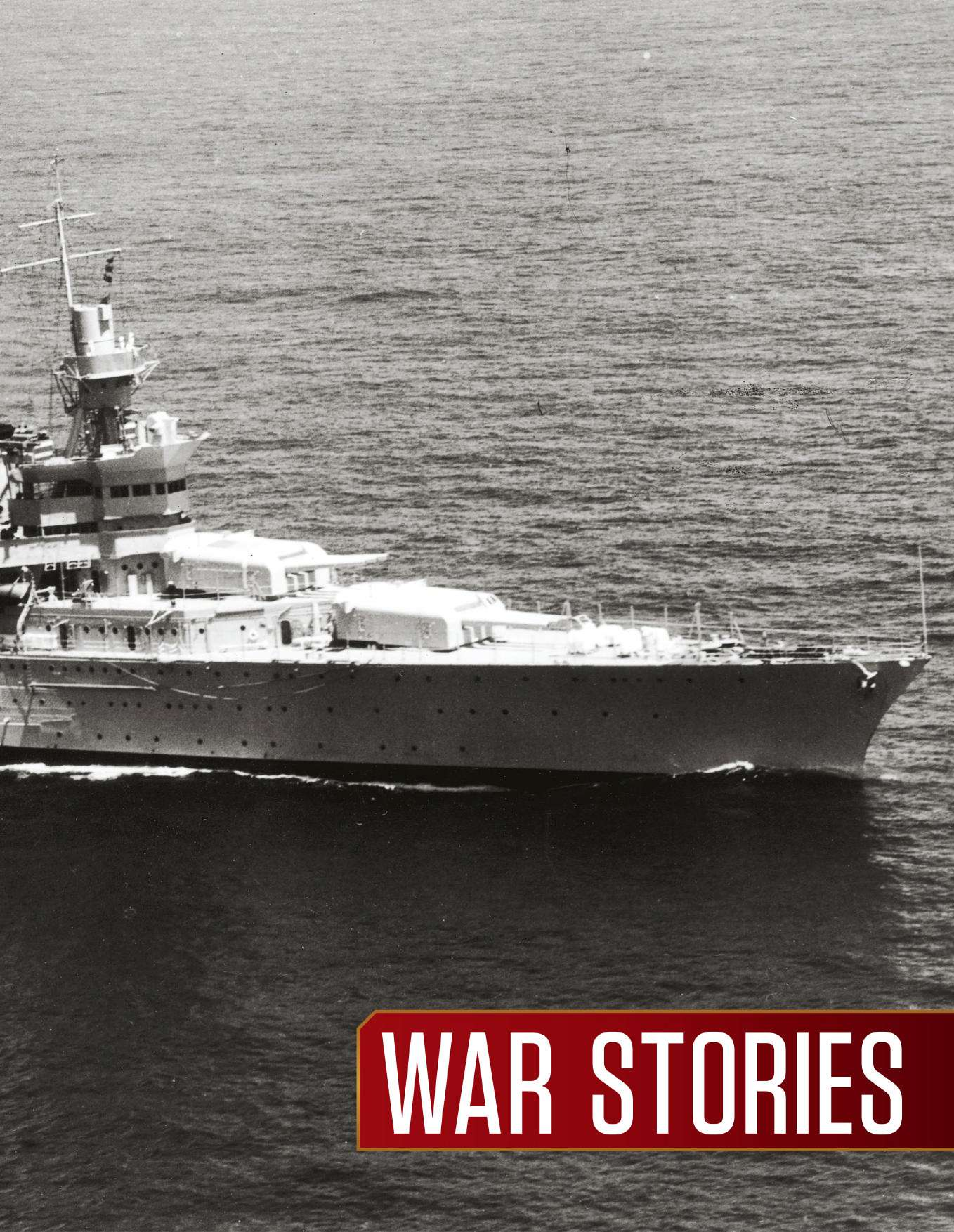




WAR STORIES

TEUTONIC KNIGHTS

THE LAST CRUSADERS

Uncover the secrets of the famous chivalric order that put Europe's 'Pagans' to the sword

Written by Gregory Leighton

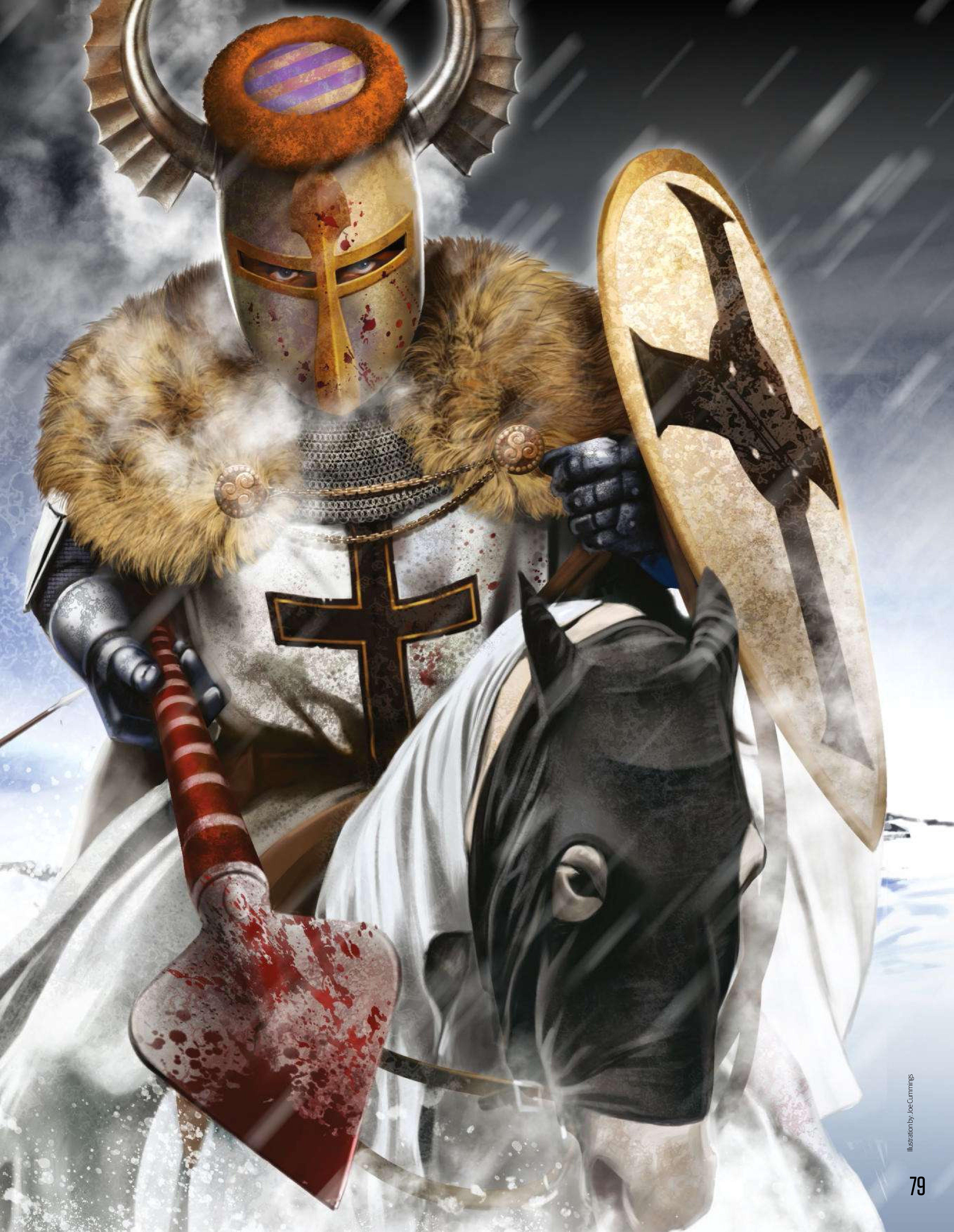


Illustration by: Joe Cummings

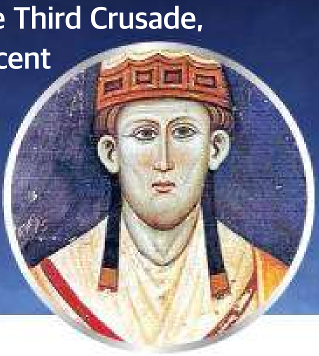
TEUTONIC TIMELINE

Key events in the evolution of this crusader order

1190-98

A Crusading Order

German knights establish a field hospital at the Siege of Acre during the Third Crusade, and Pope Innocent III officially sanctions them as the Teutonic Order in 1198.



1226-74

Prussian Crusade

The Order is invited by Polish princes to Christianise the pagan Prussians, who inhabit what are now the Baltic states. Teutonic knights quash several Prussian uprisings and eventually establish control of Prussia with the establishment of a monastic state.

1228-29

Sixth Crusade

The Teutonic Order supports Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor, when he invades Palestine. The crusaders manage to recapture Jerusalem through diplomatic means, and Teutonic knights escort Frederick for a political 'coronation' at Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

5 April 1242

Battle on the Ice

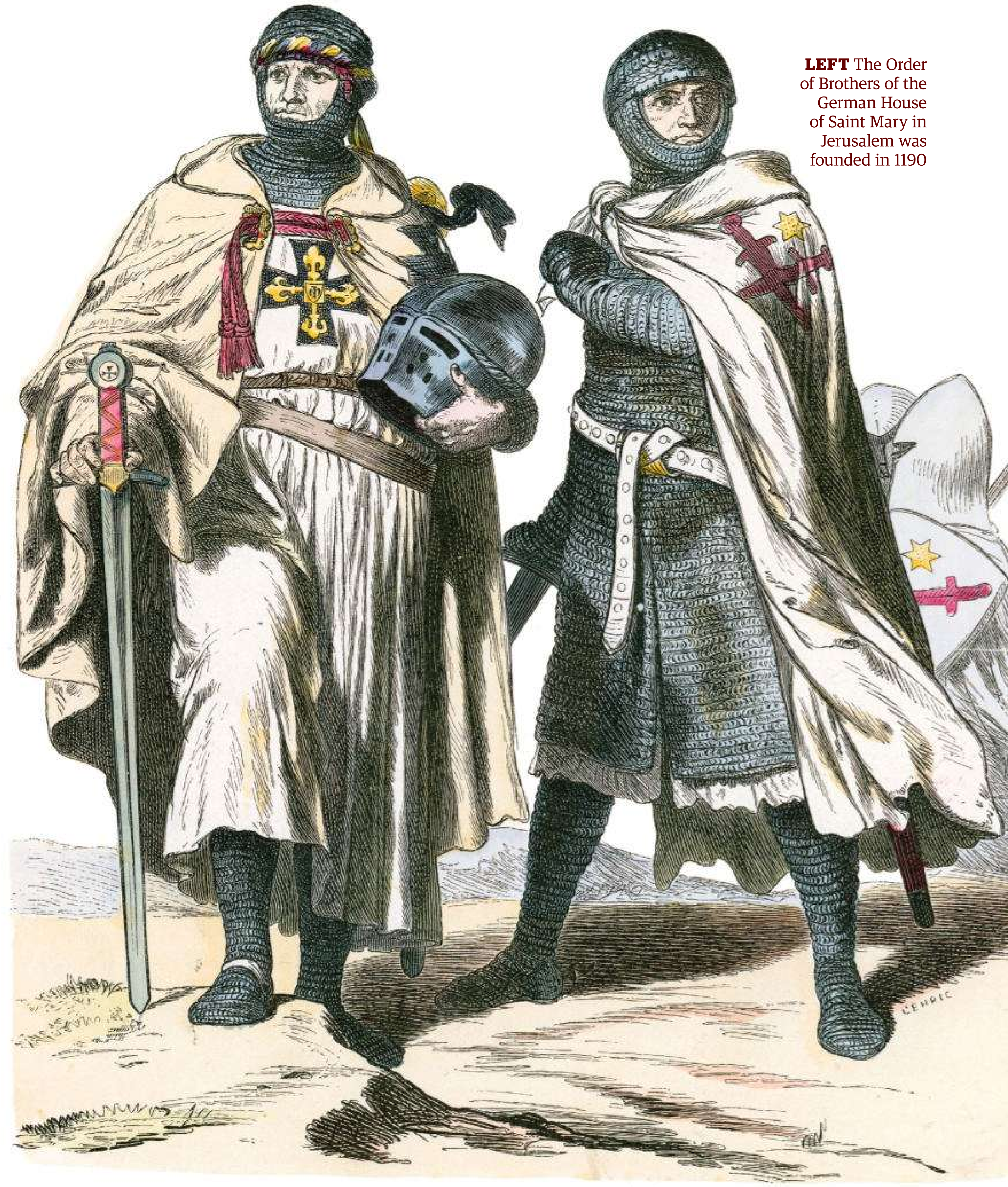
Teutonic attempts to convert Orthodox Christians of Novgorod to Catholicism dramatically fail. Prince Alexander Nevsky wins a famous battle against the knights on the frozen Lake Peipus.

The Order of the Teutonic Knights (known officially as The Order of the German House of St Mary in Jerusalem) is a charitable institution that remains active today. As indicated by its full name, it was primarily composed of German knights. The Order's origins are directly linked to the time of the Crusades to the Holy Land, when it was first established as a charitable order around 1190, during the time of the Third Crusade (1188–92).

However, it should be made clear that its members were not 'crusaders', but rather the members of a monastic corporation. They took lifelong vows of poverty and chastity, as opposed to the temporary vow made by those who journeyed on crusade.

In any case, the knights and their activities in the Middle Ages were strongly linked to the development of the crusade phenomenon. The Teutonic Knights entered a world already dominated by two (perhaps) more well-known brotherhoods: the Knights Templar and the Knights of St John, also known as the Hospitallers. The Templars' history has since crossed into a quasi-mythical realm, primarily due to their disbandment in the early 14th century. By contrast, the Hospitallers still remain active. The white cross of the St John's Ambulance Cadets seen throughout the United Kingdom today is a reminder of the Order's history. By 1198, its prestige had increased to such an extent that the Order was militarised by Pope Innocent III. It took a monastic rule that combined the martial duties of the Templars (defending the holy places and protect pilgrims visiting them) in addition to the Hospitaller obligations of the Order of St John.

As a kind of 'younger brother' to those two great military orders, the Teutonic Knights experienced a rapid rise in the



LEFT The Order of Brothers of the German House of Saint Mary in Jerusalem was founded in 1190

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1283 – 1410

Lithuanian Crusade

The Teutonic and Livonian Orders launch a series of campaigns to convert the last European pagan state – the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – to Catholicism. The duchy eventually converts to Christianity in 1386.

15 July 1410

Battle of Grunwald

The Order suffers its greatest defeat, at Grunwald, against a Polish-Lithuanian army. The battle ends Teutonic expansion along the southeastern coast of the Baltic Sea and marks the beginning of its decline in power.

1431-35

Polish-Teutonic War

The Teutonic Order invades the Kingdom of Poland in 1431, but the Poles and their Czech Hussite allies repeatedly defeat them. The Polish victory against the Livonian Order at the Battle of Wilkomierz in 1435 is considered to be a second Grunwald.

10 April 1525

Prussian Homage

The crusader state of the Teutonic Order formally ends when the grand master of the Teutonic Knights is invested as duke of Prussia in fief to King Sigismund I of Poland.

Holy Land. Throughout the 13th century it quickly increased its power in the region. The election of Hermann of Salza as grand master in 1209 marked a significant milestone in the Order's history, particularly in terms of its international relations. It began receiving grants of land in the city of Acre and fortifications in the Holy Land, and fielded soldiers in major military encounters like the capture of Damietta in Egypt in 1219 and the catastrophic defeat experienced by the Christians at La Forbie in 1244.

It was also during Salza's tenure that the Teutonic Knights emerged as an institution whose horizons began to expand beyond the defence of the Holy Land and the protection of the holy places. His navigation of complex political relationships between the papacy and the Holy Roman Empire, securing support for his young order from both parties, is a testament to Salza's diplomatic prowess. Houses of the Order popped up in Armenia, Spain, Italy and throughout Germany.

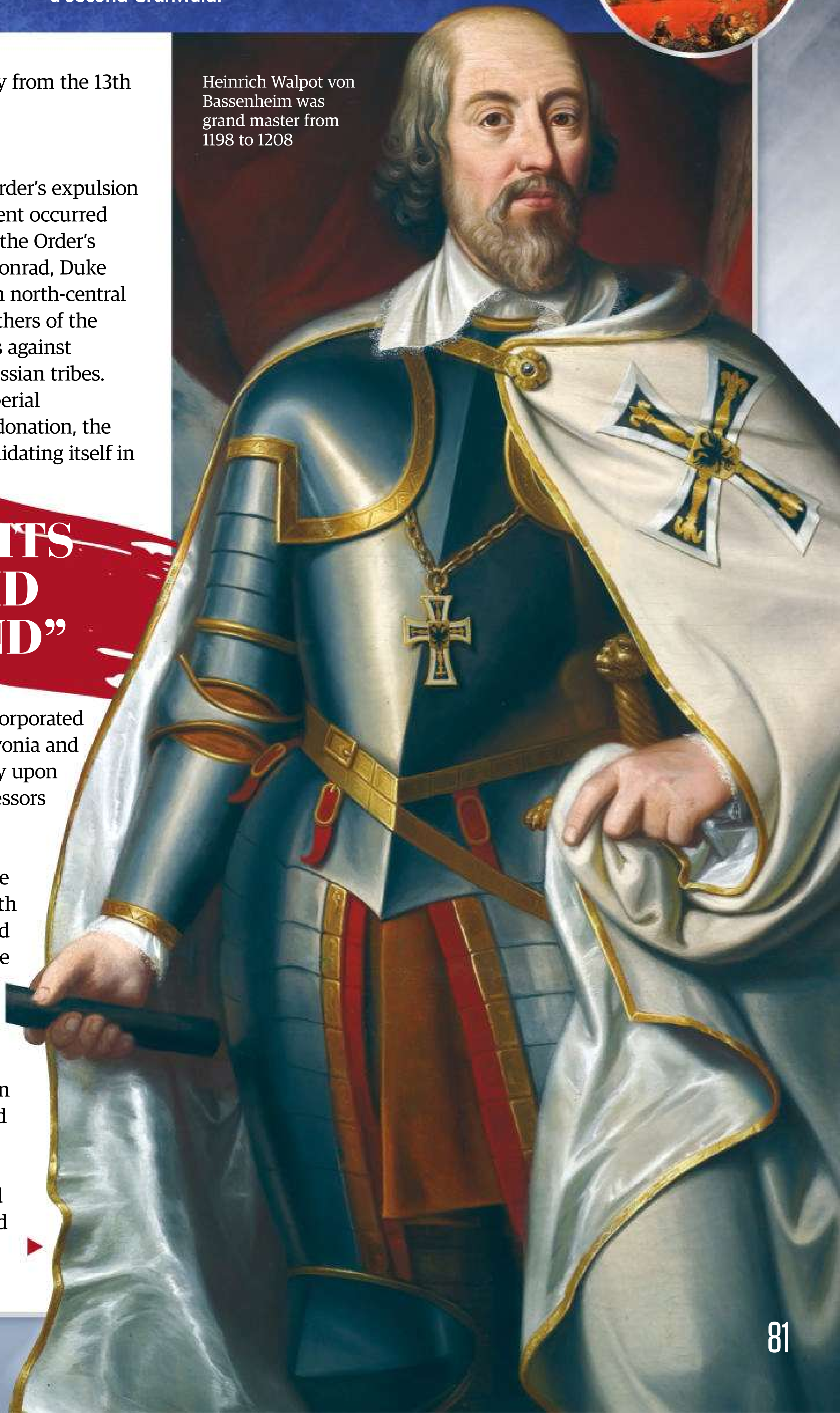
In 1211, they were summoned to the Kingdom of Hungary by Andrew II (r.1205-1235) to defend his borders against the non-Christian Cuman tribes. They were eventually expelled in 1225 due to clashes with the Hungarian king. Though brief, the 'Transylvanian episode' marks the first time that the Teutonic Knights were summoned to participate in protective operations against non-Christians. Such duties would become a key component of the Teutonic Order's history from the 13th century and into the 16th.

IN THE BALTIC

In the year following the Order's expulsion from Hungary, a pivotal event occurred that would come to define the Order's history and its reception: Konrad, Duke of Mazovia (r.1149 - 1247) in north-central Poland summoned the brothers of the Order to defend his borders against systematic raids by the Prussian tribes.

Following papal and imperial confirmations of Konrad's donation, the Order quickly began consolidating itself in the region. The knights incorporated its predecessors in both Livonia and Prussia almost immediately upon their arrival. These predecessors were fledgling local orders that we might compare to those that developed on the Iberian Peninsula in the 12th century. The first was called the Livonian Brothers of the Sword, founded in 1201, and the second were known as the Knights of Christ at Dobrin (or Dobrzyń). The consolidation of these two orders resulted in the creation of two 'branches' of the Teutonic Knights: one in Prussia and one in Livonia, each headed by a provincial master. ▶

> **"THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS EXPERIENCED A RAPID RISE IN THE HOLY LAND"**

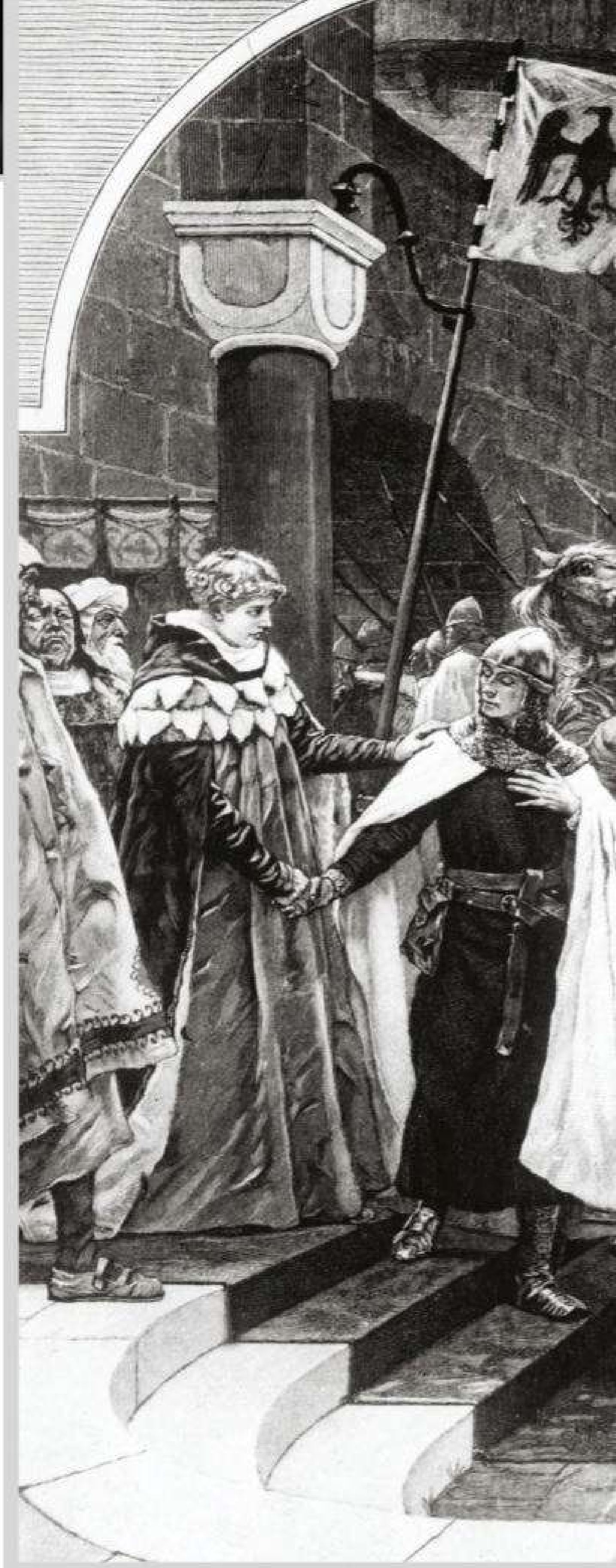


Heinrich Walpot von Bassenheim was grand master from 1198 to 1208

A wave of conquests commenced with the Order's early days in Prussia, which resulted in the foundation of key fortresses that would later develop into an extensive network of castles and towns. These foundations included Thorn (or Toruń) in 1231, Marienwerder (or Kwidzyn) in 1234, and Elbing (or Elbląg) in 1239 (among others). An anonymous report of this first wave of conquests, attributed to Hermann of Salza himself but written more likely around 1249, describes these foundations and the early success of the Order "and pilgrims [ie crusaders], who were sent through God's grace". The crusade phenomenon had arrived and planted itself firmly in the southern Baltic shores, with the knights of the Teutonic Order emerging as the most powerful organisation in the area and subject only to the pope.

To the north, in Livonia, the Teutonic Knights found themselves in a slightly different situation. This is primarily due to the pre-existing power structure and administration of the territory set up in the early 13th century. The territories received by the Teutonic Knights in Livonia were those that had already been possessed by the Sword Brothers. The division of powers in the region involved the Bishops of Riga possessing two-thirds of the conquered lands, with the Order receiving the remaining third. This created considerable tension between the Order and the church in the region, which was marked throughout the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries as a period of conflict and cooperation.

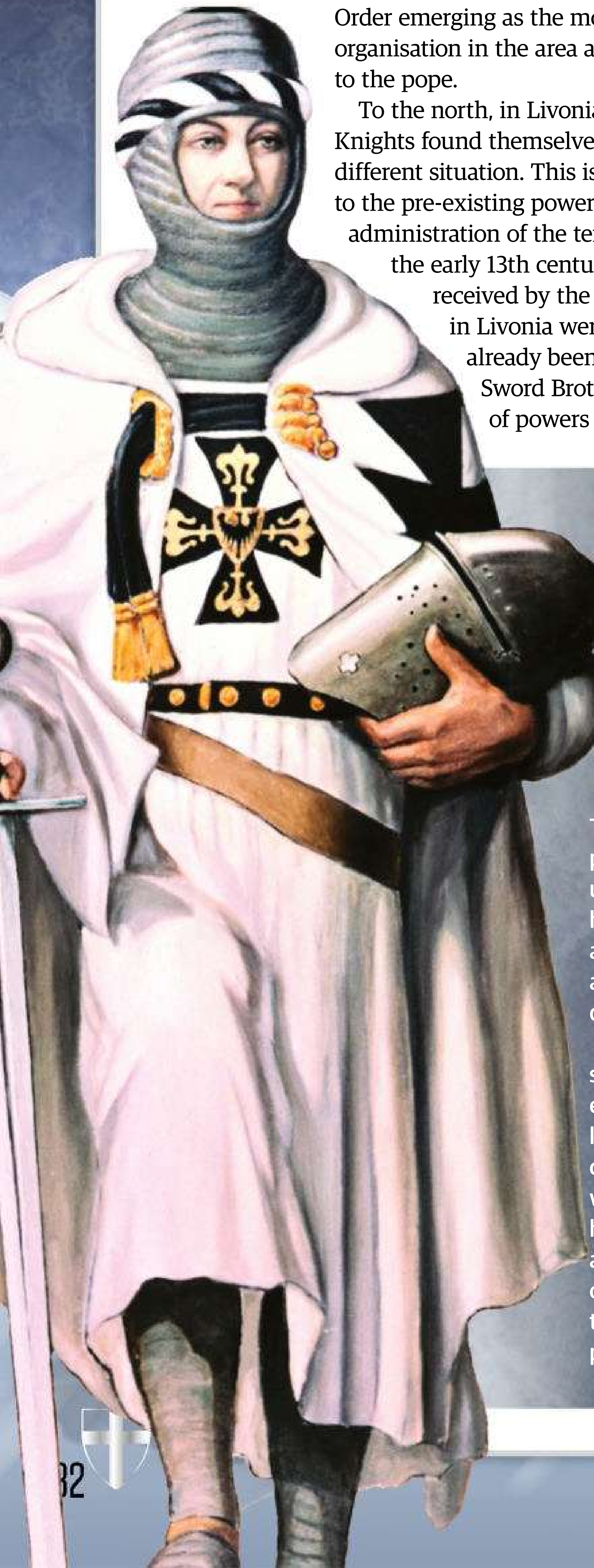
The 13th century in both Prussia and Livonia saw a significant number of key military events that shaped the history of the Teutonic Order. These include two uprisings in Prussia led by rebels and ultimately quelled by the Order, the first being from 1242-49 and the second from 1260-74, in addition to a significant defeat of the Order at the Battle of Durben (or Durbe) in 1260. The knights brought with them military technology not encountered by the populations of the region, including the use of the crossbow, the construction of stone fortifications and the use of heavy war horses common in Western Europe. With the help of seasonal participation of crusaders primarily from Germany and Bohemia, the Teutonic Order was able to subdue the Prussians by 1283, with the Livonians to the north being conquered by around 1290 (however, uprisings of the Estonians continued in the 14th century). Military encounters typically occurred in the wintertime, the primary reason being that the terrain was easier to navigate. The anonymous letter written around 1249, mentioned above, even describes winter as "the time when the pilgrims come".



CHIVALRIC CRUSADING

However, the idea of crusading lasted well beyond the 13th century in the Baltic. Peter of Dusburg, a priest in the Teutonic Order and author of the *Chronicle of the Land of Prussia,* is one of the most important historical sources for this period. Written around 1326 and perhaps intended for the papal Curia in Rome, Peter's chronicle presents a systematic overview of the conquest of Prussia from the 1230s to his own time.

Following the subjugation of the Prussians in 1283, Dusburg writes that "the war for Prussia ended, and now began the war of the Lithuanians". Although he narrates subsequent raids throughout the end of the 13th century, primarily in the regions of southern Lithuania, the

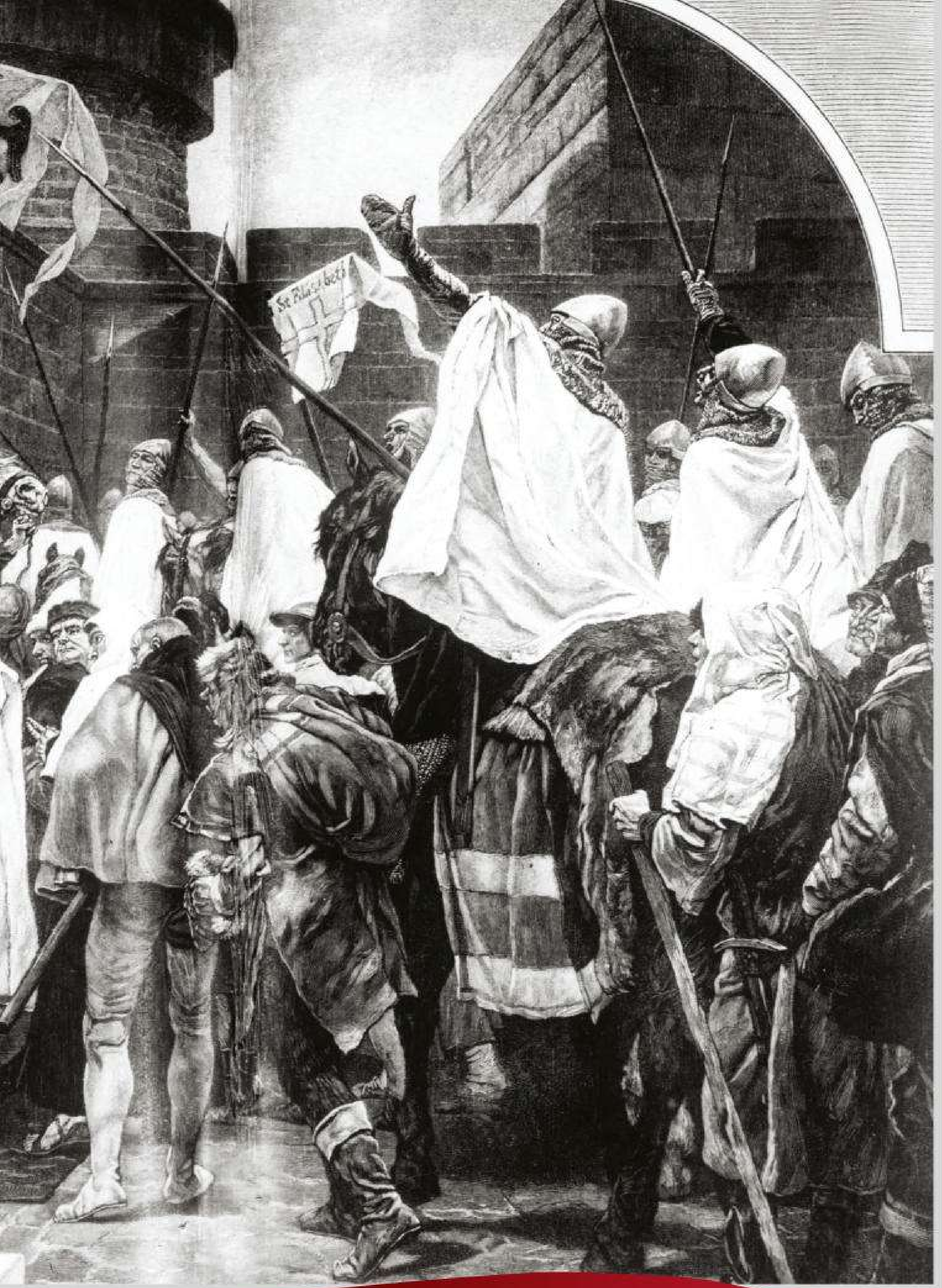


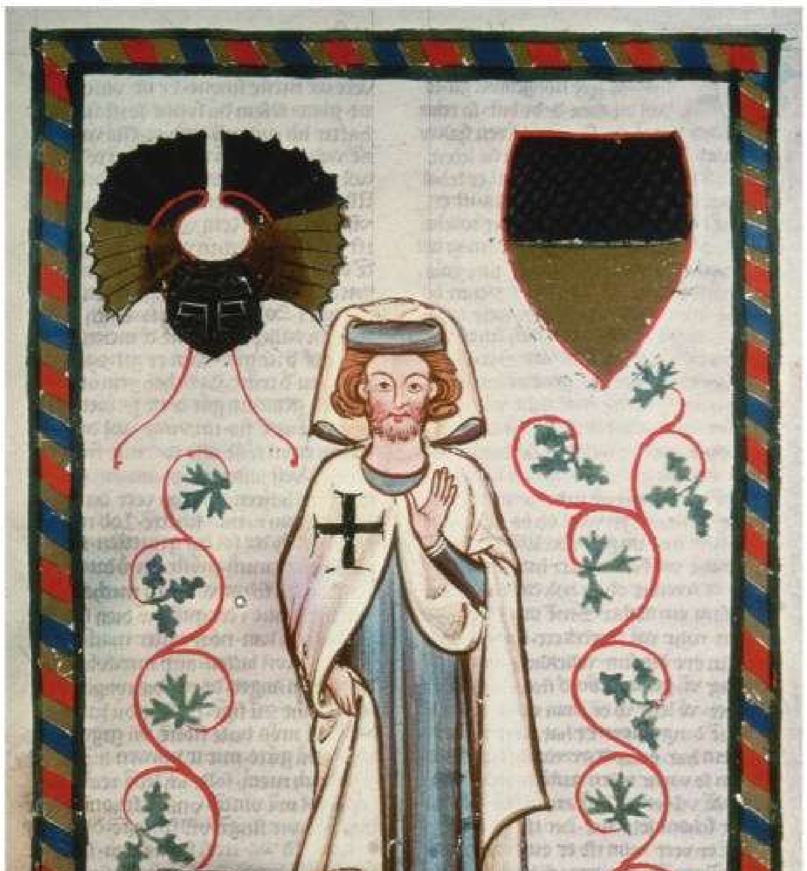
TACTICS AND ORGANISATION

Well-trained, well-armed and disciplined, the Teutonic knight was a formidable warrior

The brother-knight of the Teutonic Order was a consummate professional warrior possessing enormous martial skill and unshakeable discipline. Upon joining the Order, a knight had to swear to obey the Order's rules, renounce property and pledge his chastity. A Teutonic knight was very much a 'warrior monk' of immense religious dedication and a devoted crusader.

The knight's training as an armoured cavalryman served him in good stead against the Order's enemies. His equipment was excellent. In the 13th century, the Teutonic knight's primary weapon was a two-edged sword. He also carried a lance for use in the charge. The typical knight was equipped with chainmail that covered the entirety of his body. Over this was worn a white linen surcoat bearing a black cross. His armour was often reinforced with a coat of plates. On his head he wore a fully enclosing great helm that granted excellent protection. Additional defence was provided by a triangular wooden shield.





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"THE KNIGHTS BROUGHT WITH THEM MILITARY TECHNOLOGY NOT ENCOUNTERED BY THE POPULATIONS OF THE REGION"

year 1304 is of particular importance. It was then that "crusaders from Germany began to visit Prussia again, inspired by the Lord". This marked the beginning of over a century of sustained campaigns in the southern Baltic Zone called the Reisen (German for 'expeditions'). The Teutonic Knights were likewise beginning to experience a so-called 'Golden Age'. In 1309, the grand masters of the Order moved their headquarters to Marienburg (or Malbork) from Venice, a sign of the increased focus on the Knights' activities in the Baltic.

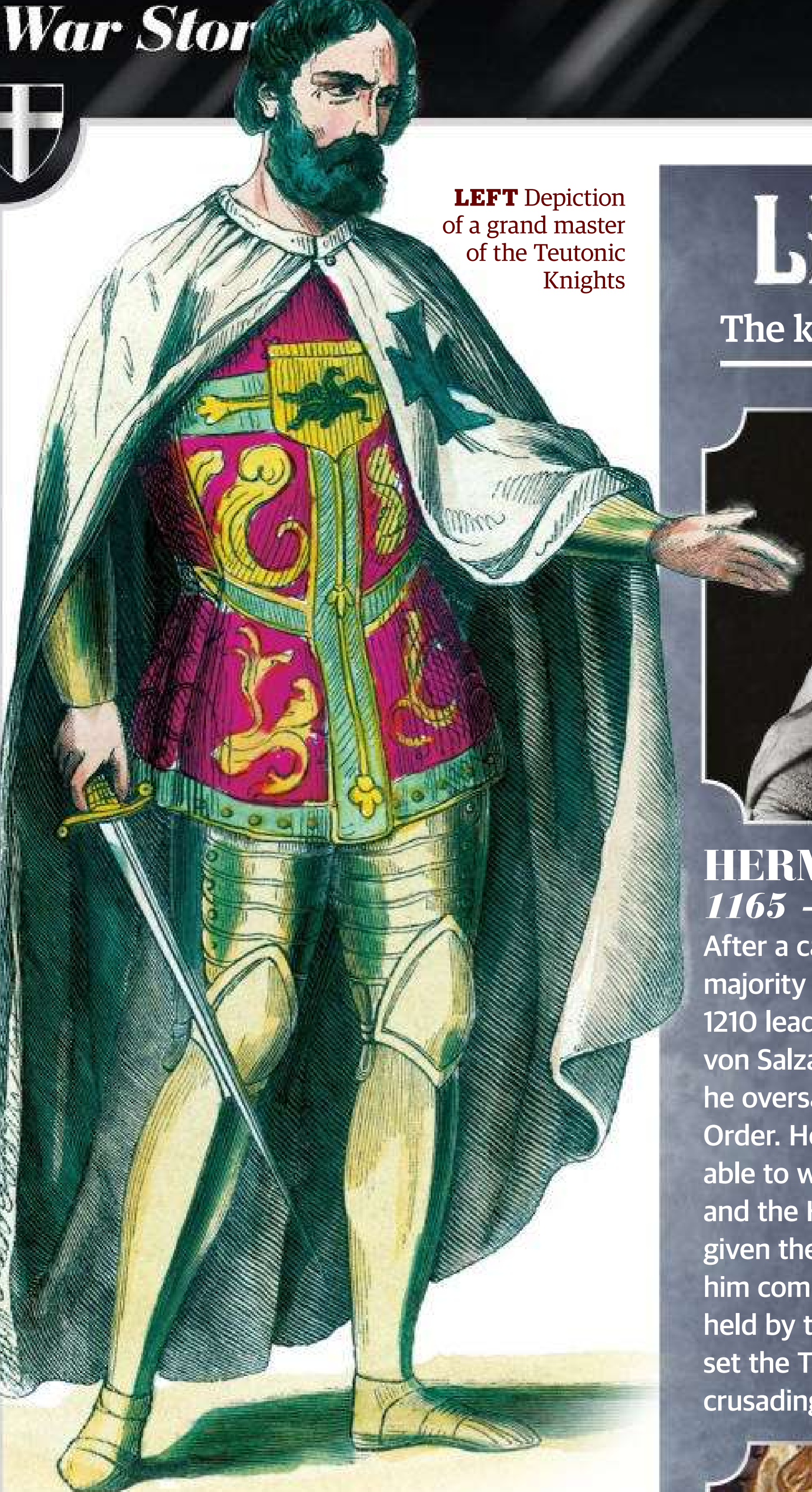
The message of the war against the Lithuanians was well received among the European nobility (the papal sanctioning of these wars, it should be noted, remains to be proven by historians). Over the course of the next century, crusaders journeyed to Lithuania from throughout Christendom to participate in campaigns against the

▶

TOP-CENTRE The Golden Bull of Rimini was issued in 1226 when the Order was tasked with converting the Prussians

TOP-RIGHT A poet known as Tannhäuser, who is depicted in the *Codex Manesse* as wearing the habit of the Order

RIGHT A pavise (oblong shield) bearing the cross of the Order



LEFT Depiction of a grand master of the Teutonic Knights

Lithuanians. These were complex, at times even contradictory, expressions of the Order's crusade commitments.

Feasting, jousting, hunting and other festivities attracted young knights and noblemen throughout the 14th and early 15th century. The Teutonic Order was more than happy to provide such opportunities, and perhaps the best example of this link between crusade and chivalry is the 'Table of Honour'. Knights who distinguished themselves in battle would earn a seat at the head of this table and commemoration in the Order's historical texts. A list of such participants from 1385 survives today. The popularity of these expeditions expanded to popular literature, too: the Knight in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1387 - 1400) sat "many times at the bord [ie the Table]". Henry Bolingbroke, the Earl of Derby and future King Henry IV of England, twice journeyed to Lithuania and distinguished himself at the Siege of Vilnius in 1390. Jean II Le Maingre, the Great Marshal of France, visited the region in the 1380s and 1390s, too, as did noblemen from Germany, Spain and Italy.

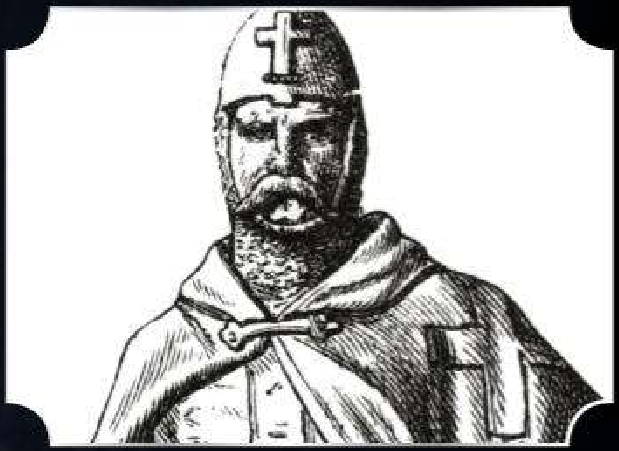
LEADERS & COMMANDERS

The knights were led by many remarkable soldiers during their long history

HERMANN VON SALZA

1165 – 1239

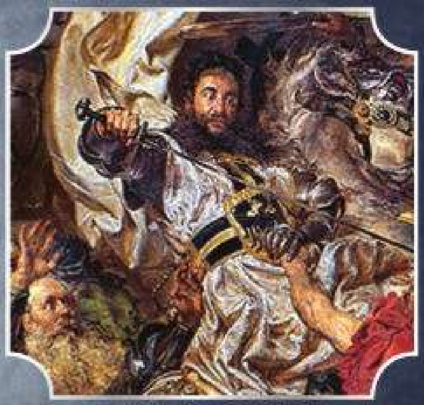
After a catastrophe in Cilicia in which the majority of the Teutonic Knights were slain, in 1210 leadership of the Order fell to Hermann von Salza. As hochmeister, or grand master, he oversaw a remarkable revival of the Order. He was an able diplomat who was able to win the affection of both the pope and the Holy Roman emperor. Von Salza was given the Golden Bull of Rimini, which gave him complete sovereignty over the lands held by the Order. He died in 1239, having set the Teutonic Order firmly on its course of crusading in the Baltic lands of Europe.



HERMANN BALKE

Unknown – 1239

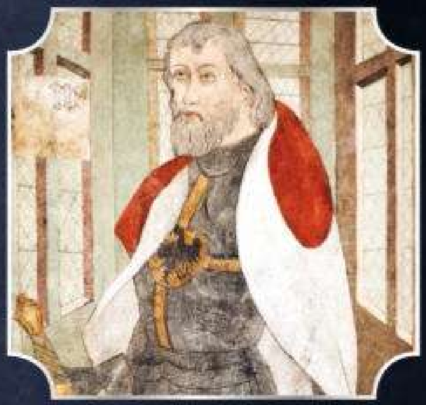
In 1229 two of the Order's knights were sent to Prussia, where they constructed the castle of Vogelsang on the Vistula River. Not long after they were slain by the pagan Prussians. Undeterred, in 1230 the Order sent Hermann Balke with 20 knights and 200 sergeants to hold the castle. An energetic crusader, in 1231 Balke led an attack on Prussian lands beyond the Vistula and captured a Prussian fortress-temple. In 1237, he departed Prussia and took up the post of landmeister of nearby Livonia. Though never a grand master of the Order, Balke's achievement was considerable.



ULRICH VON JUNGINGEN

1360 – 1410

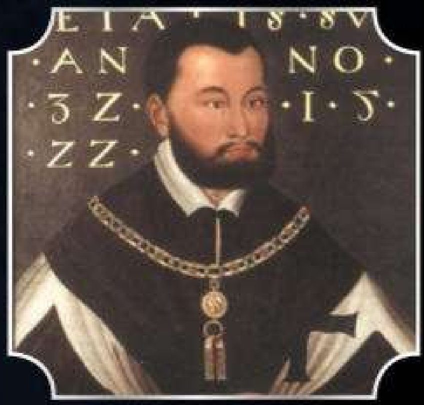
Elected grand master in 1407, von Jungingen presided over the defeat of the Order at the Battle of Grunwald in 1410. His demand that Poland and Lithuania stop their support of Samogitian rebels only fanned the flames. Peace talks came to nothing, and von Jungingen gathered his forces. The Teutonic Order met the Polish-Lithuanian army under King Władysław Jagiełło of Poland at Grunwald on 15 July 1410 and were slaughtered, losing about half their strength. Von Jungingen died in the fighting.



HEINRICH VON PLAUEN

1370 – 1429

Despite defeat at the Battle of Grunwald in 1410, the Order saved itself from destruction, largely due to Heinrich von Plauen, who became grand master after the death of von Jungingen. He gave no ground to the Poles and Lithuanians. Władysław Jagiełło, the king of Poland, had not anticipated encountering such resistance at Marienburg. After eight weeks of bombardment, Władysław withdrew. Von Plauen recaptured most of the castles taken by the Polish and Lithuanian forces.



ALBRECHT VON HOHENZOLLERN

1490 – 1568

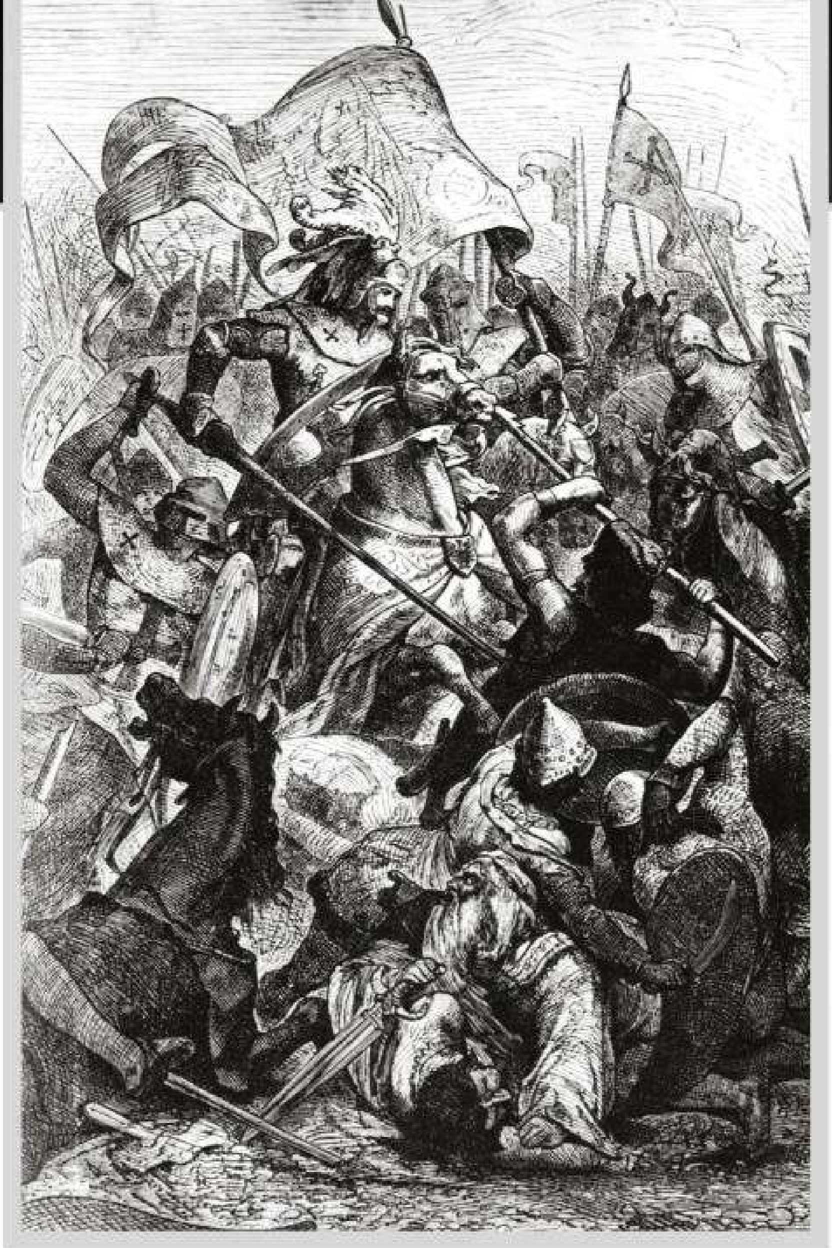
Albrecht von Hohenzollern became grand master in 1511, just a few years before Lutheranism swept across Germany. He allowed Lutherans to preach in his court in Königsberg. Lutheran reforms soon followed. In 1525, as duke of Prussia, he swore allegiance to the king of Poland, bringing peace with that realm. Albrecht renounced his vow of celibacy and married a woman named Dorothea, a princess of Denmark. Albrecht put down a peasant uprising in 1525 and ruled Prussia until 1568.

CRISIS AND DECLINE

However, things were not as positive as they might appear on the surface. Although the peak of crusading in “the land of the Saracens” (a term transplanted to the Baltic to give legitimacy to crusading activities) continued throughout the 1390s, Lithuania had officially converted to Christianity in 1386. This sparked a significant crisis for the Order and threatened its very existence. If there were no more pagans to fight, why was the Order still needed in Prussia? Not that this had hindered the Knights before. They had entered a significant conflict with the (Christian) Kingdom of Poland following their annexation of Pomerelia and attacks of the cities of Danzig (or Gdańsk) in 1308 and Gnesen (or Gniezno) in 1331.

This would spark a conflict that lasted for nearly a century and was intensified by the outbreak of the so-called Great War of 1409-11 between the Teutonic Knights and the Kingdom of Poland. On 15 July 1410, at the hands of Wladyslaw II Jagiello, King of Poland, and Vytautas, Grand Duke of Lithuania, the Teutonic Order was defeated in battle at Tannenberg (or Grunwald). The grand master of the Order, Ulrich of Jungingen, was killed and many knights and soldiers (mercenaries) captured and held for ransom.

The defeat of the Order at Tannenberg was a significant turning point. In Prussia, the Teutonic Knights found themselves backed into a corner, primarily because it was unable to cover the financial costs incurred by years of hiring mercenaries (itself a result of a decline in recruitment figures for the Order). Moreover, plans were made to move the Order to another frontier and a new mission, perhaps even back to Hungary to set themselves up to fight the Turks. The Council of Constance (1414-18) questioned the necessity of the Order’s existence.



ABOVE The Teutonic Order and Lithuania Duchy fought for over 100 years

BELOW Malbork Castle was built in the 13th century by the Teutonic Order and remains the largest castle in the world by land area

To the north, in Livonia, the impact of Tannenberg was such that the branch of the Order there enjoyed more independence from Prussia. They did not participate in the Battle of Tannenberg, and as a result of the fallout experienced by the Prussian branch, remained in a stronger administrative and economic position. However, the Battle of Wiłkomierz (1 September 1435) served as a significant blow to the Order’s authority in this region. The Master of the Livonian Branch, Frank Kerskorf, was killed in this battle.

Internal and external struggles continued to plague the Teutonic Knights in both Livonia and Prussia for the remainder of the 15th century. The Order and the towns in Prussia were pitted against one another as a direct result of the defeat at Tannenberg and the First Peace of Thorn (1411), which required the Order to raise taxes in the Prussian towns in order to repay its debt to the Kingdom of Poland. As a result, in 1440 the ‘Prussian Union’ was formed. It was essentially a confederation of noblemen and clergy in Prussia against the Order. In 1454, this Union requested that it become subject to the Polish Crown, as opposed to the Order, which sparked the so-called Thirteen Years War (1454-66). The Order experienced a significant setback and the conflict resulted in the creation of ‘Royal Prussia’. The Teutonic Knights lost their claims to a significant amount of land, including the Kulmerland, Warmia, and Eastern Pomerania, confirmed by the Second Peace of Thorn (1466). They were forced to move their headquarters to Königsberg (or Kaliningrad).

“IF THERE WERE NO MORE PAGANS TO FIGHT, WHY WAS THE ORDER STILL NEEDED IN PRUSSIA?”

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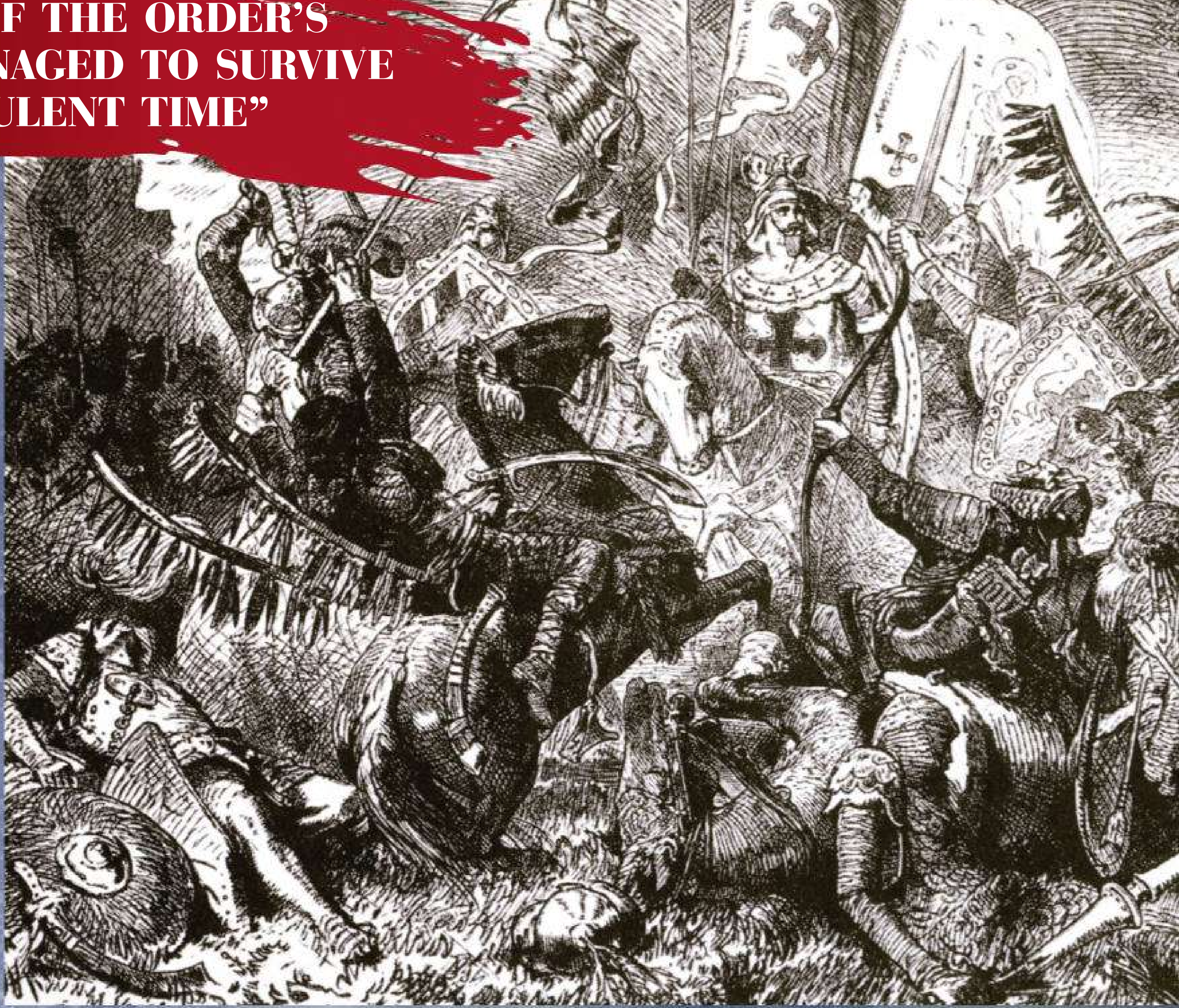
“SOME ELEMENTS OF THE ORDER’S ORIGINAL MISSION MANAGED TO SURVIVE EVEN THIS TURBULENT TIME”

Some elements of the Order’s original mission managed to survive even this turbulent time. This is particularly true with the Livonian Branch and its conflicts with Novgorod. Although Christians, they were seen as Schismatics by the Church. As such, the Teutonic Order in Livonia crafted a steady propaganda campaign throughout the 1440s to fight “against the Schismatics and Unbelievers”. The Order took advantage of the benefits of styling itself as “bulwark of the Christian faith against the unbelievers and the Schismatics” in order to secure financial support in the form of raising money for future campaigns. In Prussia, however, the grand masters did not wish to renounce their claims to the region any further. As a result, when they were called upon to participate in campaigns against the Ottomans by the King of Poland, Jan Olbracht (r.1492 - 1501), only a small party of knights joined, under the leadership of the Grand Master John of Tiefen. On their way to the battle in 1497, Tiefen died in Lemberg (or Lviv) of disease.

TRANSFORMATION

The fallout from the Second Peace of Thorn resulted in a considerable re-organisation of the Teutonic Knights’ power structure in Prussia. Tensions between the Order and the Kingdom of Poland continued to rise, and the knights faced the real risk of further military conflict, which began in 1519. This was the so-called Reiterkrieg of 1519-21, which only stopped with the intervention of Emperor Maximilian I. Albert of Brandenburg-Ansbach, elected as grand master in 1511, converted to Lutheranism in 1525. The Reformation in Prussia resulted in the transformation of the Teutonic Order’s territory into the Duchy of Prussia, marking the transformation from a territory ruled by a religious order to one ruled by a secular one. In fact, the grand master took the title of duke of Prussia and performed homage to the Polish king.

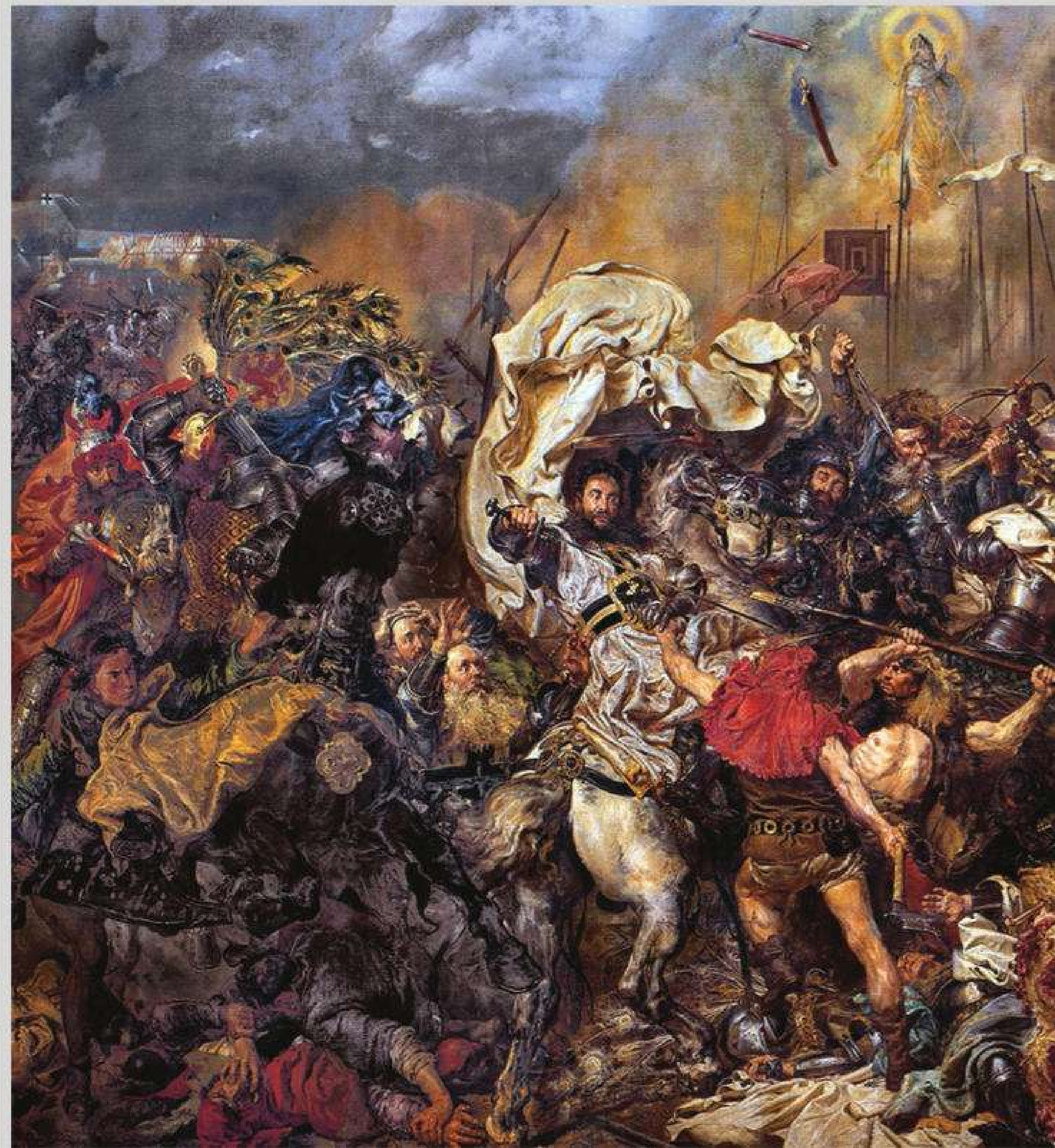
Luther’s ideas did not take hold among members of the Livonian Branch until later. In some ways, we might connect this to the continuity of crusade ideas and themes on this frontier. The master of the Order, Walter of Plettenberg, even asked for the pope to call a crusade against

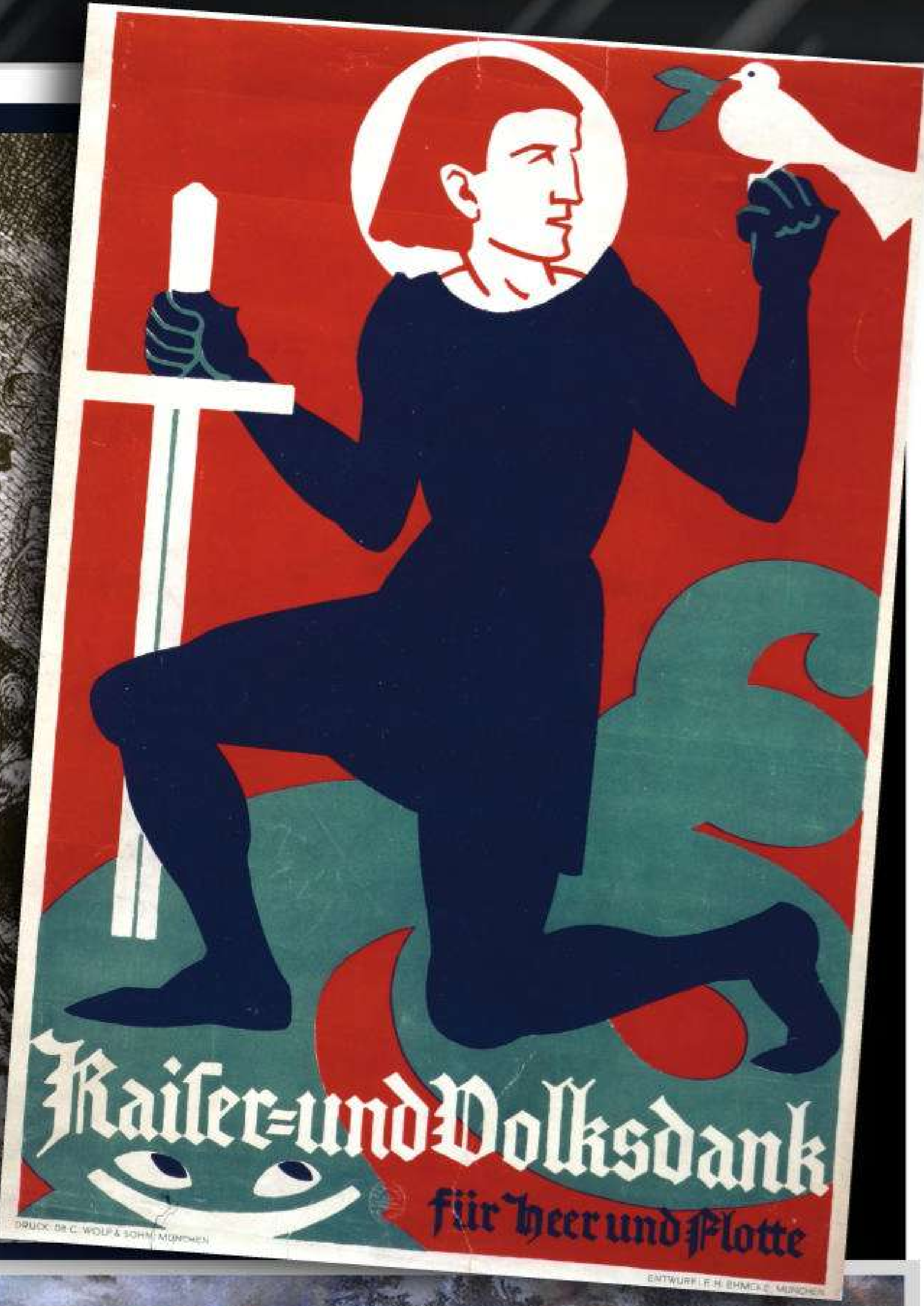


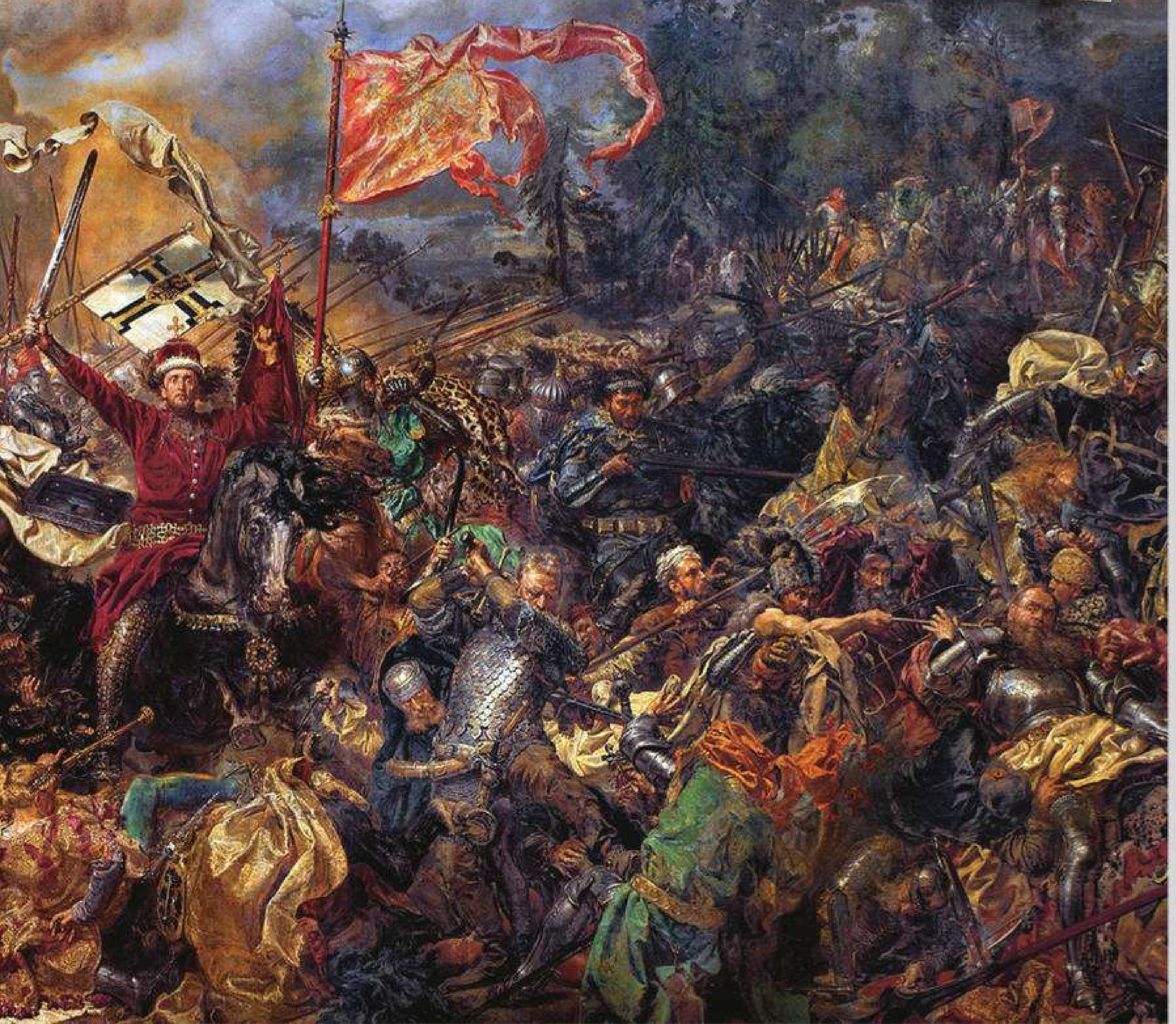
ABOVE
A 19th century engraving of the Teutonic Knights fighting the Poles and Lithuanians

ABOVE-RIGHT
Teutonic Knight imagery has continued to be used into the modern era, such as with this WWI poster from Germany thanking the military for its service

RIGHT
Jan Matejko’s painting of the Battle of Grunwald in 1410, a huge defeat for the Order




Kaiſer=und=Volksdank
für Heer und Flotte
DRUCK: DR. C. WOLF & SOHN, MÜNCHEN
ENTWURF: F. H. EHMCKE, MÜNCHEN



the Russians. The early 16th century saw continued conflict between the Livonian Branch of the Order and Muscovy, culminating in the Battle of Lake Smolino in September 1502. As a result of this victory, a religious feast and procession was instituted in the city of Riga and Plettenberg was commemorated as the saviour of the region. Subsequent conflicts between the Livonian Branch of the Order and the Russians continued, known as the Livonian War, which lasted from 1558 to 1583. This conflict began with the invasion of Livonia by Ivan IV, causing the Livonian Master to flee to Poland-Lithuania. In 1559, Gotthard Kettler was elected as master of the Livonian Branch. Continual raiding in the countryside meant that the Livonian Branch was significantly weakened. In 1560, the Order suffered defeat at the Battle of Ergeme, and in the next year it was dissolved with the signing of the Treaty of Vilnius in 1561.

It is important to note that the term 'the last crusaders' may not technically apply to the Teutonic Order. Members did not take temporary vows to join the Order, but rather joined for life and took additional vows of poverty and chastity. However, the Teutonic Knights in the Baltic were key figures in what some might call the last 'crusades', and surely oversaw and facilitated one of the last great booms in crusading activity. Perhaps, in this way, we can call them helpers of 'the last crusaders'.

LEGACY

The Teutonic Order's modern history is just as rich as its medieval and early modern past. It survived the Napoleonic Wars of the early 19th century and two world wars. Moreover, it was coopted by nationalist ideologies, becoming either a cruel and ruthless oppressor or harbinger of civilisation. It brings to mind the depiction of the Order in Sergei Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky* (1938) or Alexander Ford's *Knights of the Teutonic Order* (1960) as savage and proud knights bent on destruction. The image of the Order as predecessors to the Nazi eastward expansion was also employed by propagandists, though it should be remembered that Hitler disbanded the Teutonic Knights in 1939.

The Teutonic Order today, headquartered in Vienna, bases its identity in many ways on the first and original duties of those German crusaders at the Siege of Acre in 1190. Its motto is a testament to this: "To Help, To Defend, To Heal." Perhaps we can see it, then, as part of the last crusaders.

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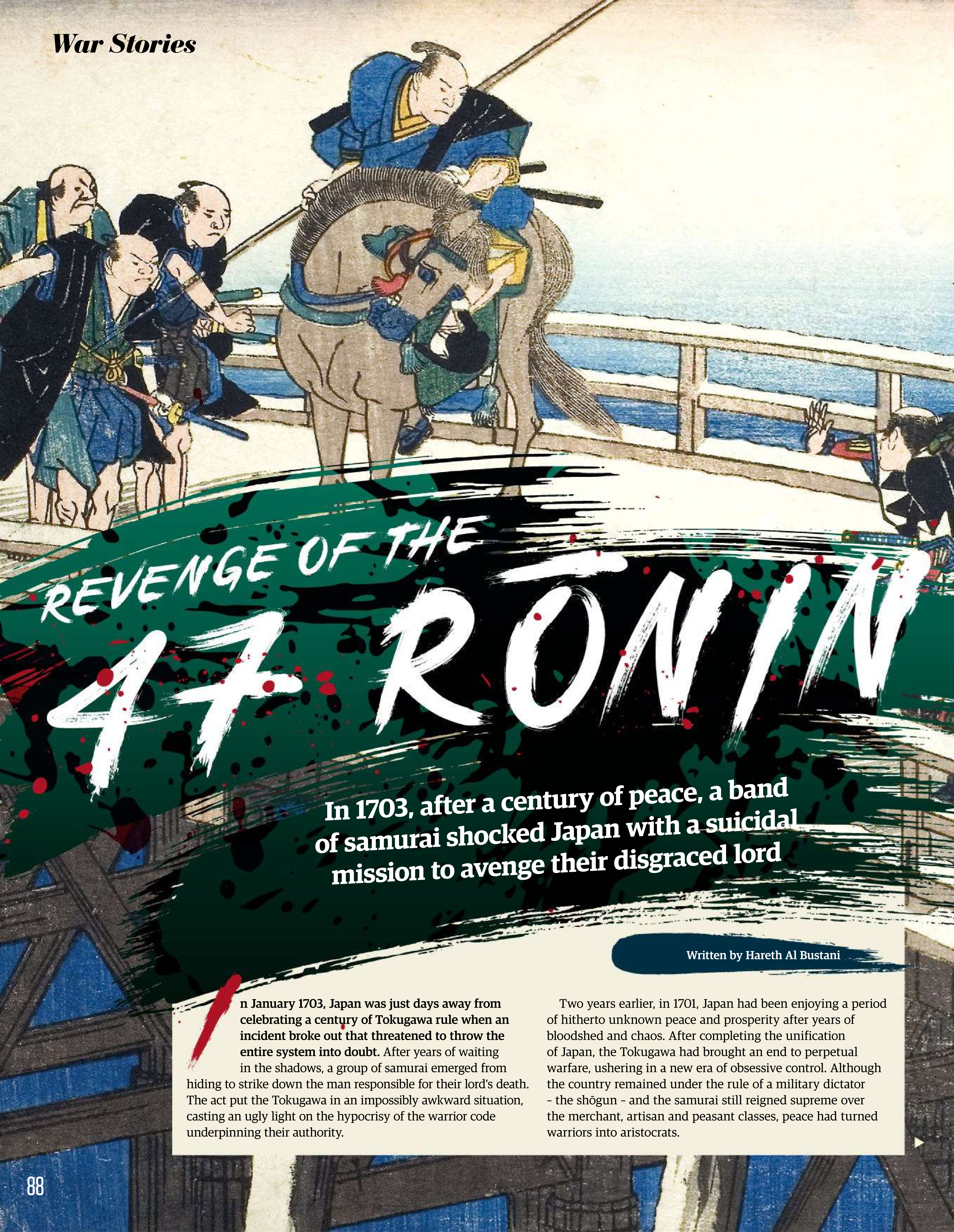


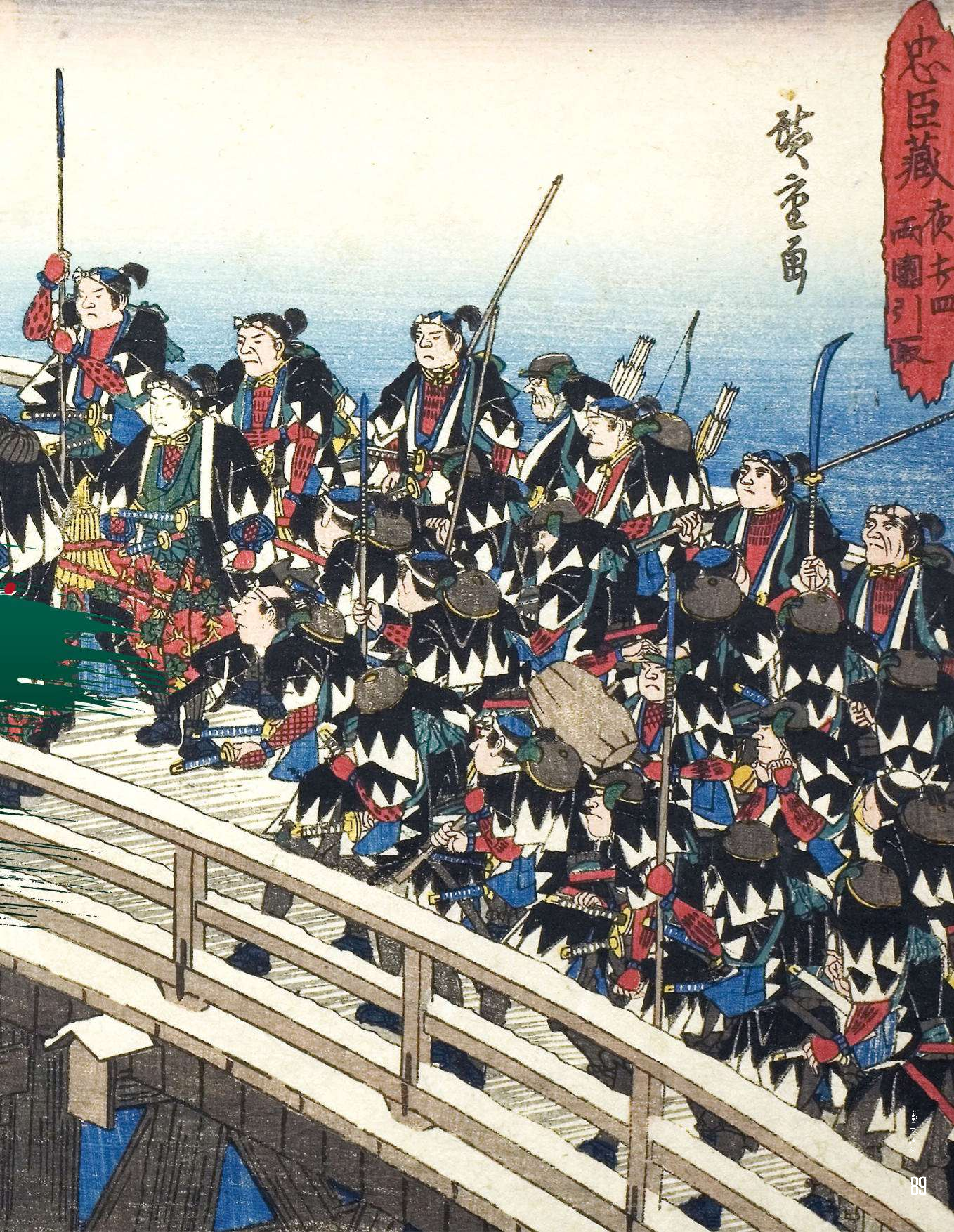
REVENGE OF THE 47 RŌNIN

In 1703, after a century of peace, a band of samurai shocked Japan with a suicidal mission to avenge their disgraced lord

Written by Hareth Al Bustani

In January 1703, Japan was just days away from celebrating a century of Tokugawa rule when an incident broke out that threatened to throw the entire system into doubt. After years of waiting in the shadows, a group of samurai emerged from hiding to strike down the man responsible for their lord's death. The act put the Tokugawa in an impossibly awkward situation, casting an ugly light on the hypocrisy of the warrior code underpinning their authority.

Two years earlier, in 1701, Japan had been enjoying a period of hitherto unknown peace and prosperity after years of bloodshed and chaos. After completing the unification of Japan, the Tokugawa had brought an end to perpetual warfare, ushering in a new era of obsessive control. Although the country remained under the rule of a military dictator – the shōgun – and the samurai still reigned supreme over the merchant, artisan and peasant classes, peace had turned warriors into aristocrats.


忠臣蔵 夜討四 両国引取
廣重画

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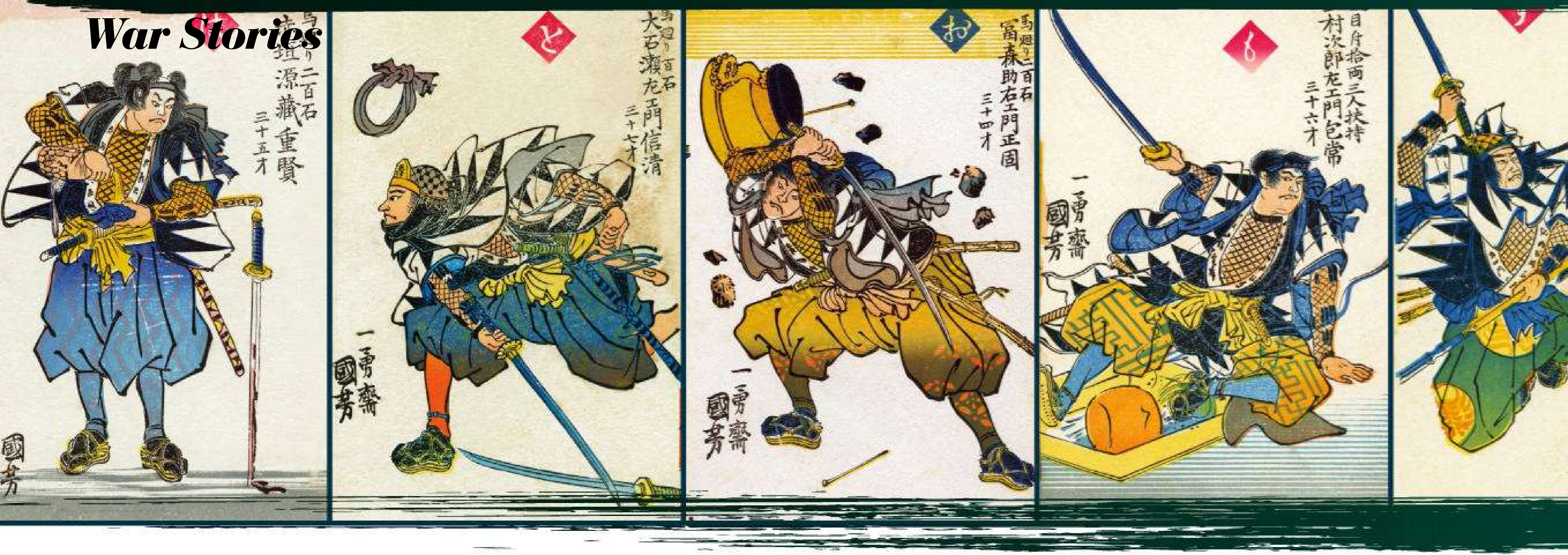

源藏重賢
三十五才
と
馬廻り百石
大石瀬左エ門信清
三十七才
一勇齋國芳
お
馬廻り二百石
冨森助右エ門正因
三十四才
一勇齋國芳
目付拾両三人扶持
村次郎左エ門包常
三十六才
一勇齋國芳
國芳

Stephen Turnbull, an expert on Japanese history, describes how a "cosmopolitan culture" flourished in the capital Edo (Tokyo) as the economy flourished. Reflecting on the times, Turnbull explains: "While on duty there, a samurai's display of redundant military might concealed the state of genteel poverty into which many of them had sunk, along with their once-exclusive martial traditions. Commoners now wore swords in open defiance of the law, while theatres put on plays whose plots mocked the once noble tradition of the samurai."

In his book *A Brief History of the Samurai*, historian Jonathan Clements sets the scene: "As part of the endless rounds of ceremonial and courtesy calls of the Tokugawa period, Asano Naganori, the young feudal lord of the Akō domain was ordered to entertain envoys in Edo who had freshly arrived from Kyōto – still the official capital. As part of the preparations, he was instructed by Kira Yoshinaka – historically known as Yoshihasa – one of the Shōgun's high-ranking officials. The men do not appear to have hit it off, and, reading between the lines, Kira was expecting substantial bribes and honoraria from Asano, even though it was his job to instruct him."

Asano and Kira were samurai of very different breeds. Having inherited his domain at the age of eight, according to Turnbull early reports described the 34-year-old Asano "as being intelligent and strict but much given to pleasure in preference to the sober business of government". He was also said to have displayed neither literary nor military skills, and had "a considerable sexual appetite," supposedly promoting retainers based on their success in procuring women for him.

Kira, on the other hand, was a member of an exclusive group of 'high families' responsible for overseeing the Tokugawa's ceremonial matters. By 1701, the 60-year-old had served successive shōguns as an "utterly reliable master of court ceremonial" for four decades. Turnbull adds: "A man in that position, one can safely assume, did not suffer fools gladly. When faced, therefore, with having to instruct in etiquette a young daimyo to whom court ceremonial was much less interesting than court ladies, and a man who appeared ignorant of the most basic learning and yet enjoyed an income 11-times greater than his stuffy old teacher, Yoshihisa's self-control was to be tested to the limit."

Clements says that Kira had "mastered the art of the snide comment" and may have made "one allusion too many about Asano's country origins." On 21 April 1701, during a confrontation in Edo Castle's Corridor of Pines, Clements says "Kira pushed too far," provoking an enraged Asano into drawing his wakizashi short sword – the only type of sword allowed in the palace – and slashing his face. Alluding to their hostilities, Asano roared: "Have you forgotten my recent grievance?"

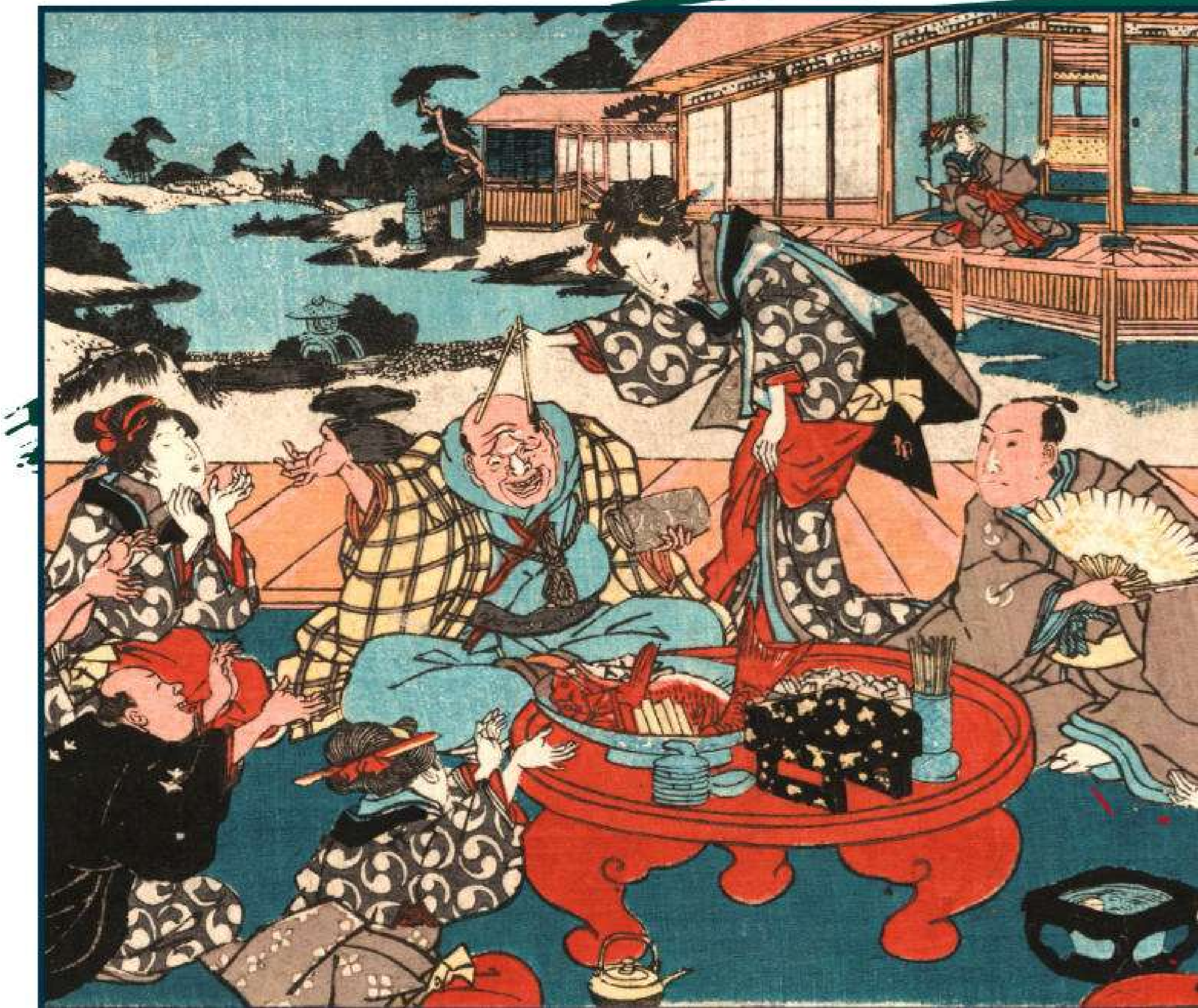
ŌISHI SPENT THE NEXT TWO YEARS LIVING LIKE A TYPICAL OUTCAST SAMURAI; DRINKING COMPULSIVELY

BELOW During his two years of planning, Ōishi fooled Kira's spies by frequenting bars and brothels, and even supposedly feasting on fish on the eve of the anniversary of his master's death

BELOW-RIGHT After enduring one insult too many from the haughty master of court ceremonial, Kira Yoshihasa, Asano made the fatal mistake of drawing his weapon in the shōgun's palace

Although the wound was minor and the men were promptly separated by guards, drawing a weapon within the shōgun's palace was a capital offence no matter what the cause. Asano had made a fatal mistake, one that was resolved with great haste: the attack took place at around midday, Asano was arrested at 1pm and at 4pm he was ordered to kill himself by ritualistic belly-cutting, known as seppuku. At 6pm, Asano extinguished his own life. Sharing the fate that befell all vanquished or shamed households, his lands were stripped away and his followers made outcasts, becoming wandering masterless samurai, known as 'rōnin', or 'men of the waves'.

One of the unintended consequences of the lasting peace ushered in by the Tokugawa was a surplus of these masterless samurai. Whether their lords had been defeated in war or simply impoverished, numbers of unemployed samurai swelled across the nation. While many hung up their swords to become monks



or merchants, others roamed the countryside as roving bandits, (as described by Kenneth Henshall in his *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*).

In previous times, one might expect samurai to follow their masters into death - a practice known as junshi. When the Hōjō clan were overthrown in 1333, 6,000 followers were said to have killed themselves. Seeing it as a precious drain of resources, the Tokugawa banned the act in 1663 and enforced it so strictly that when a vassal of Okudaira Tadamasa killed himself upon his master's death, two of his children were executed and several relatives banished.

However, for a samurai whose lord had been wronged there was another honourable route available: katakiuchi - the vendetta. George Sansom, author of *A History of Japan, 1615-1867*, explains: "The first case of katakiuchi in the Edo period was the Igagoe encounter of 1634, between one Watanabe Kazuma and Kawai Matagorō, who had murdered Kazuma's father. Kazuma, accompanied by a brother-in-law and two young samurai, pursued Matagorō and more than a score of his kinsmen into a lonely upland in the province of Iga. Kazuma's small party overcame their enemies and Matagorō was killed."

As soon as Asano's castellan Ōishi Yoshio heard of his master's death he shut down the castle as ordered, disbanded the soldiers

RISE OF THE CHŪSHINGURA

Suppressed at first, the story of the 47 rōnin has become one of Japan's most iconic tales

The revenge of the 47 rōnin was adapted into a gripping drama known as *Chūshingura, The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*. However, at first the Tokugawa desperately fought to suppress it, "slapping down" every play and print depicting the event, says Jonathan Clements, author of *Japan at War in the Pacific: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empire in Asia: 1868-1945*. He adds: "They really wished it would go away, but they were stuck with the fact that this event had really happened, and that it risked inspiring everyone to behave in the same way. The best analogy I can think of is American gun laws.

"You have this antique custom, a 'right to bear arms', sitting there in the blueprint for society, and everyone pretends it doesn't make that big a difference, but it literally weaponises thousands of tensions, conflicts and vendettas throughout the country. Japan has had a century of peace, but its entire ruling echelon is a society of actual warriors, whose job it is, technically, to kill people, and the 47 rōnin are a sudden, jarring reminder of what it is samurai actually do."

The play was not performed on stage until it was adapted into a bunraku puppet show almost 50 years later. "And even then, the authors pretend that it's describing events from hundreds of years in the past in an attempt to get around the censor," says Clements. Later adapted into a kabuki play, *Chūshingura* has since become one of Japan's most beloved stories, depicted in literature, television, anime and even a 2013 adaptation starring Keanu Reeves.

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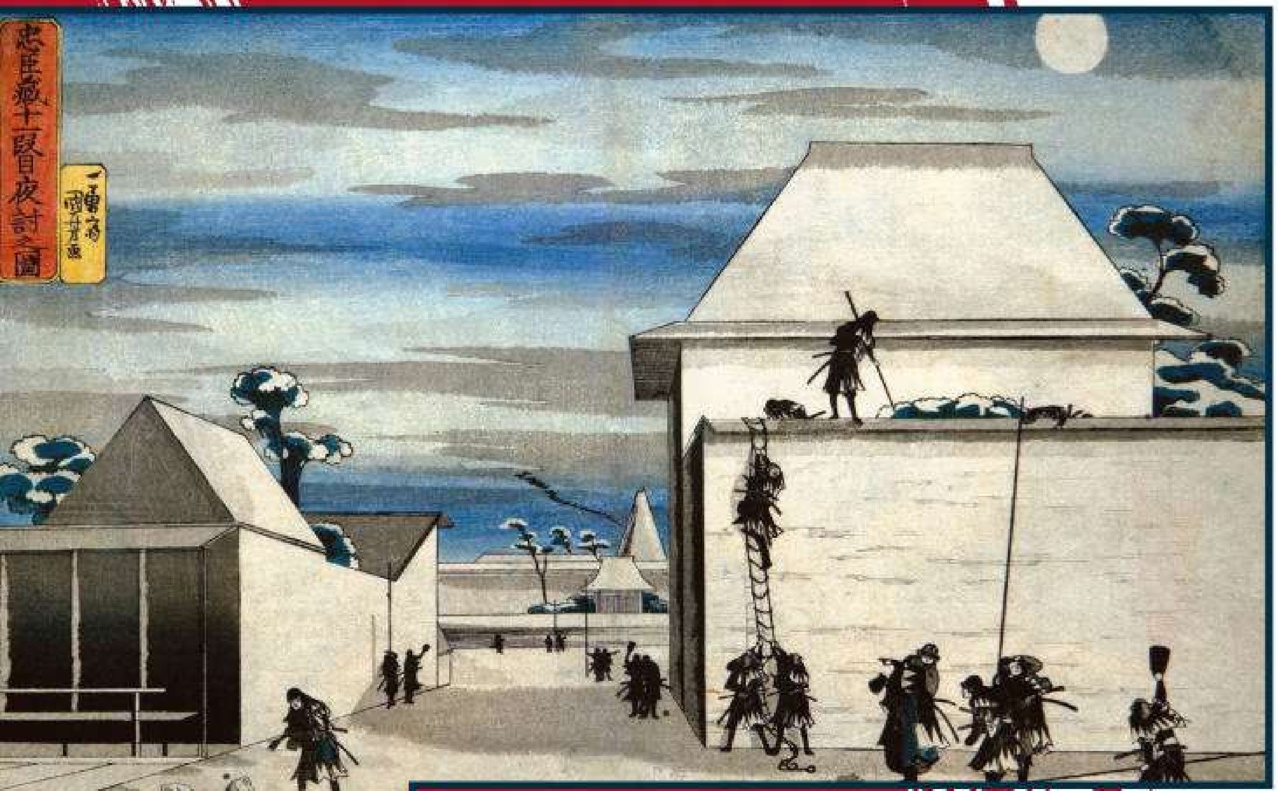
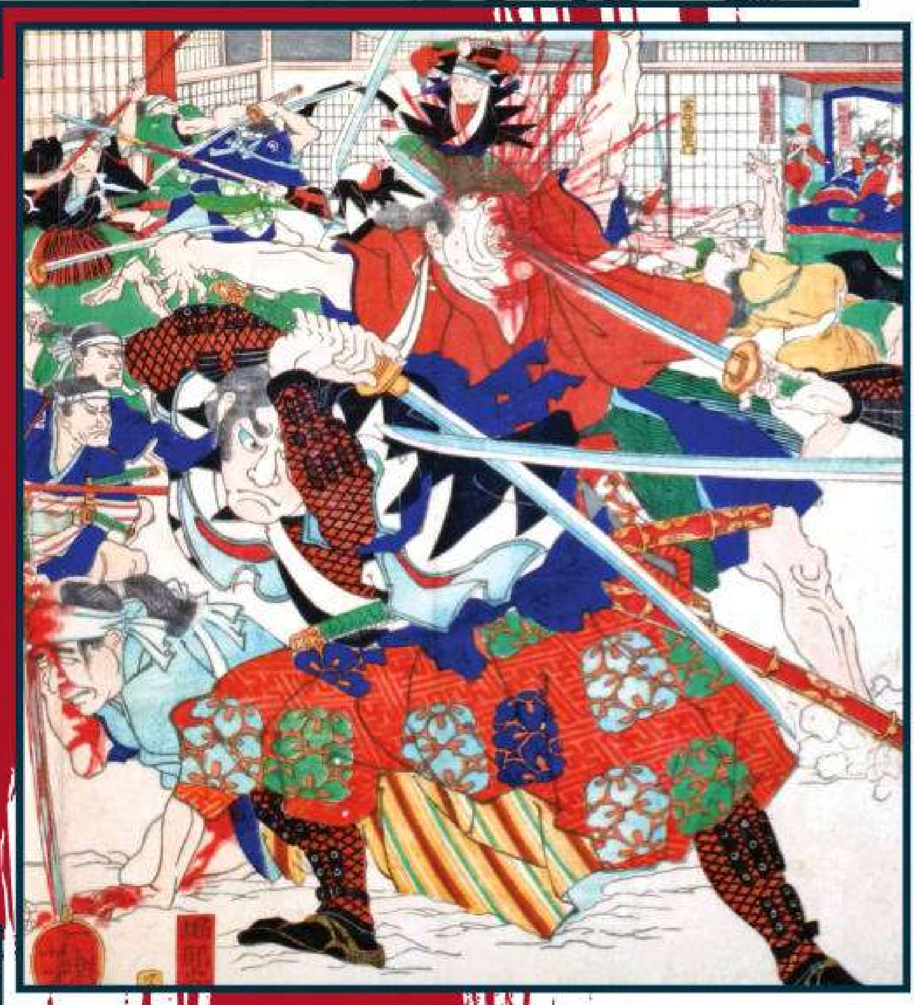
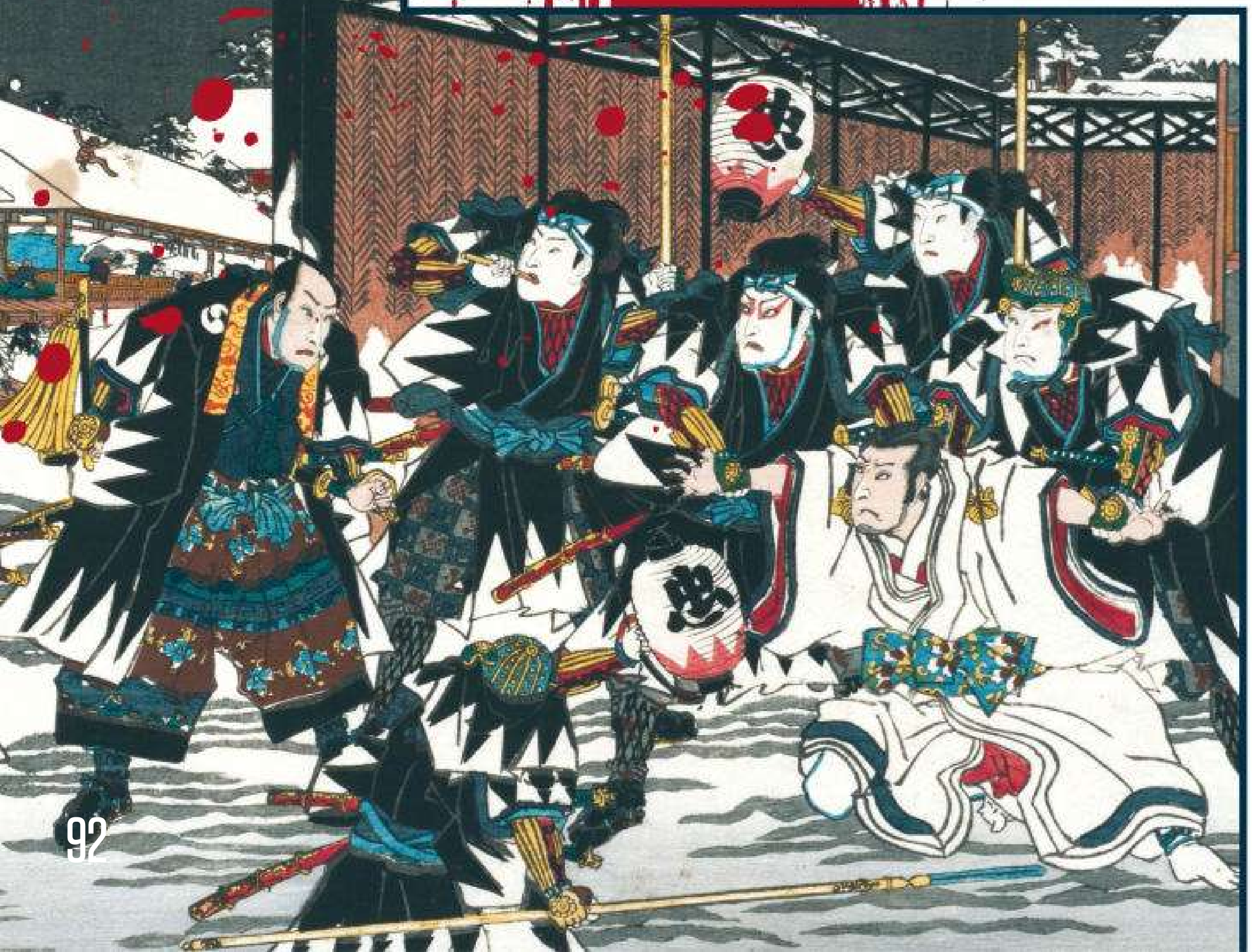

忠臣藏十一段目夜討之圖





ABOVE The 47 ronin launched their assault under a cloak of night and snow, scaling the walls of Kira's mansion, while trying to minimise civilian casualties

RIGHT Art by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi from 1864 depicting the night attack of the 47 ronin

BELOW When Kira refused to die with honour by killing themselves, Ōishi cut off his head, using the same sword his master had killed himself with

and handed the keys to the new lord appointed by the shōgunate. Clements reflects: "Where once there might have been war, the Tokugawa rule was supreme and a lord could be unseated by simple decree." However, tellingly, neither Ōishi nor his comrades chose to kill themselves. They had something else in mind…

Although Ōishi had fulfilled his duty to the shōgun, he had a greater duty to fulfil: avenge the abuse of his lord Asano. Choosing suicide before clearing his master's name was unthinkable. So, together with dozens of retainers, he descended into the shadows of the underworld and began slowly plotting his revenge. Keen to maintain the element of surprise and disarm his enemies of any suspicions, he turned to 'method acting'. Over the next two years Ōishi played the role of a typical outcast samurai, drinking at Kyōto's seediest bars and brothels. Outwardly it seemed he had simply given up on it all. He even divorced his wife and disowned his children - though, in reality, this was to insulate them from the consequences of his future actions.

Clements describes how the plan came together: "Slowly, the 47 rōnin converged on Edo. One married the daughter of the man who had built Kira's house, obtaining in the process the plans for the inside of the mansion. Others secretly smuggled weapons into Edo." After two years of waiting, during the winter of 1702/03, under a cloak of night and snowfall, the assassins launched a night raid on Kira's castle. Turnbull says one dramatic recalling has Ōishi proclaim: "Our hatred of our lord's sworn enemy is piled up like this white snow. This evening we attack to avenge our lord. We will need enough force to move a mountain. The pure snow will both wipe away our disgrace and muffle our voices."

Attacking both the front and rear gates simultaneously, the samurai scaled the walls with ladders, before asking the surrounding mansions not to intervene in what was a vendetta directed against one individual. Leaving behind archers to strike down anyone attempting to raise the alarm, the attackers pressed forward and ingeniously hammered iron clamps into the door frames of the long barracks housing the vast majority of Kira's sleeping ashigaru soldiers - trapping them within. That left just the elite samurai in the mansion itself to deal with.

Clements adds: "Pointedly, several of Ōishi's men were assigned to secure the porters, neighbours and servants, not with violence but with the simple announcement that the samurai were on noble business and that no non-combatants need be hurt."

As Ōishi beat on his war drums, he and his men rushed into the mansion, breaking out in chaotic fighting with Kira's valiant defenders. In the ensuing chaos, 17 of Kira's men were killed and 22 wounded - remarkably, none of the 47 rōnin were seriously hurt. As his men died all around in heroic fights to the death, Kira himself fled through a hidden door, with Ōishi in hot pursuit. Having finally caught up to his foe, Ōishi held up a lantern to his face, revealing the distinctive scar left by his master's blade.

As Kira dropped to his knees and bowed, Ōishi offered him the chance to atone by performing seppuku. When he refused, Ōishi promptly grabbed a handful of his hair, dragged him up and lopped off his head, supposedly with the same blade his lord had used to kill himself.

As they left, the rōnin extinguished the lamps in the house to avoid sparking off a fire and then carried Kira's head to their master's grave. By the time they arrived at the Zen temple grounds of Sengakuji, word had already spread and they received a heroes' welcome from the local townsfolk. Later, they handed themselves into the authorities, sending just one survivor to Asano's former domain to spread word.

The events placed the Tokugawa authorities in an uncomfortable situation. "The samurai had behaved impeccably according to samurai tradition, but had also defied a shōgunal

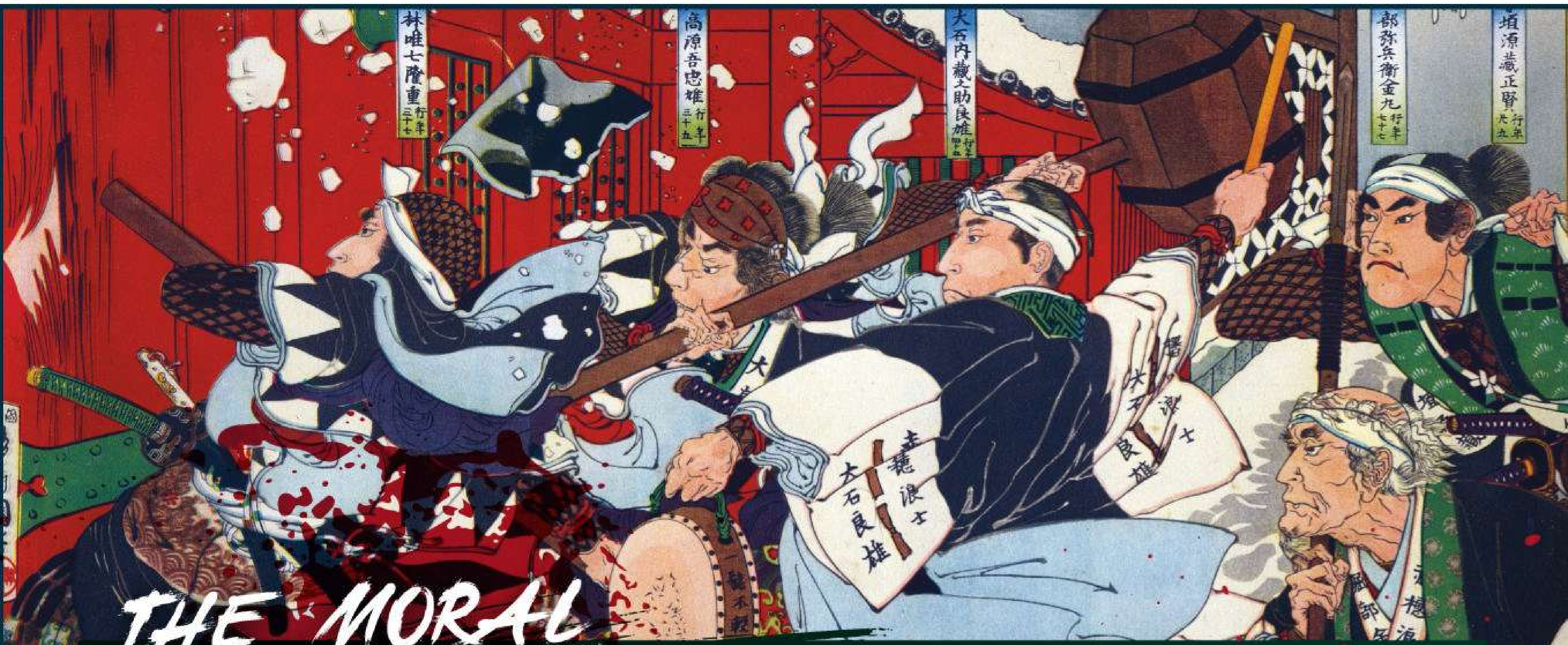
WHEN KIRA REFUSED TO KILL HIMSELF, ŌISHI DRAGGED HIM UP BY HIS HAIR AND LOPPED OFF HIS HEAD

prohibition," writes Clements, adding: "Edo locals did not help by petitioning the shōgun on behalf of Ōishi and his men, pointing out how true they were to the nebulously defined samurai code of honour. Eventually, the shōgun ordered that instead of the death penalty as common murderers, the rōnin would be offered the chance to perform seppuku as a gesture of respect."

As expected, asides from the lone messenger – who was spared – the warriors carried out the verdict with haste and honour. In the process they cleared their lord's name, leading to the restoration of his house, with a reduced fief.

Clements says the story has grown with each telling: "Writers on the 47 rōnin tend to focus on the tactics and facts of the vendetta itself, and not on the awful, inescapable system that pushed these men into acting the way that they did. Ōishi acted the way he did and Kira acted the way he did [partly because of] this huge long chain of obligations and rules and graft that shunts entire armies of men around Japan on a regular basis to stand guard at the shōgun's palace, to keep them busy and in thrall to the guy who runs the country. But [the shōgun] only does so because he has this kind of emergency generalship that he shouldn't really have after 100 years without a war to fight.

"But that, too, is why it had such a resonance in Edo Japan, because the 47 rōnin were a reminder of the foundations of Tokugawa society. They become a symbol of the sort of pressures that everybody is under, men on the edge who see themselves left with no other option. And there's this question hanging there for the next 150 years: what if the Tokugawa are the bad guys? What if this is all their fault? What if the whole system is a sham and we really should be worrying more about, you know, modernisation and foreign threats and everything else that eventually bubbled to the surface in the Meiji Restoration of 1868, which was, of course, framed as a bunch of samurai bringing down the system out of their professed loyalty to it." ○


林唯七隆重
高原吾忠雄
大石内蔵之助良雄
部弥兵衛金九
埴源蔵正賢
赤穂浪士
大石良雄

THE MORAL QUESTION

The revenge of the 47 rōnin raised some serious questions about the samurai warrior code

Although the 47 rōnin were widely celebrated for avenging their lord, in the immediate aftermath there was some debate over their actions. On one hand, George Sansom points out that the Tokugawa "could not forbid acts of vengeance inspired by Confucian ideals of loyalty and piety." On the other, he says: "Persons intending to execute vengeance had to apply to the Bakufu for permission, which was usually granted."

Stephen Turnbull says the 47 rōnin prompted reactions ranging from admiration to condemnation: "The secrecy involved in their convoluted plot compounded the utter illegality and underhand nature of their act, to which the shōgun responded correctly by invoking the law of the land."

Jonathan Clements says the events cut right to the core of samurai values: "Armchair critics, and that was pretty much everybody in Japan, all had an opinion about the operation. Should they have struck sooner?" What if, he questions, the target had died of illness during the two-year planning stage? "Should they have been more open about it? Were they all victims of the Tokugawa system, trapped by a series of events set in motion by corrupt officialdom?" Clements adds: "The Tokugawa's fear was that every single possible confrontation in Japan risked being settled by battlefield rules."

The episode was an uncomfortable reminder of how the samurai, especially the Tokugawa, got to where they were. "They've spent 100 years telling everybody samurai are honourable and adhere to traditions, and suddenly there's a matter of samurai honour… and samurai tradition, that still turns out hyper-violent and murderous. It risks turning every back-alley stabbing into a revenge killing, every burglary into a justifiable military action, in the eyes of the people who commit those crimes."

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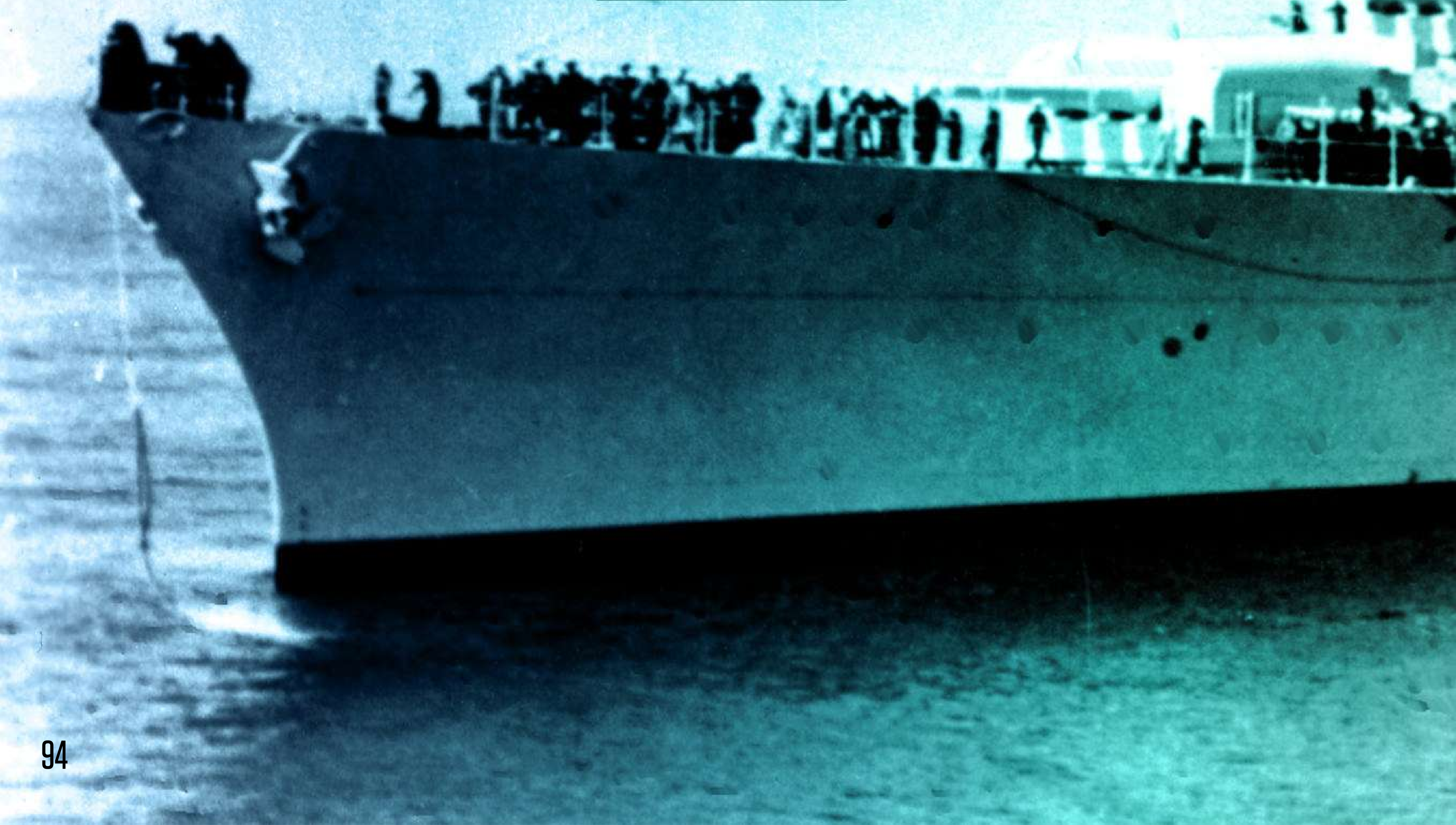
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE USS INDIANAPOLIS

The heavy cruiser met its tragic end after delivering components for the nuclear bomb nicknamed Little Boy

Written by Michael E Haskew



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FAR-LEFT President Franklin D Roosevelt aboard USS Indianapolis with his family as he reviewed the United States fleet in New York Harbor

LEFT The USS Indianapolis, shown here in 1939, was badly damaged in early 1945 as it supported US landings on Okinawa

After completing its mission to deliver components of the nuclear bomb Little Boy to the island of Tinian in the Marianas during World War II, the heavy cruiser USS Indianapolis was torpedoed and sunk by the Japanese submarine I-58 in the Philippine Sea shortly after midnight, 30 July 1945.

Approximately 300 men of the ship's complement of 1,195 personnel were killed when the warship plunged to the bottom just 12 minutes after being struck by two Type 95 torpedoes, while nearly 900 were cast into the sea with only life vests and a few rafts. Through a series of miscommunications, the sinking was not reported in a timely manner and the survivors drifted in the open sea for nearly four days. During the horrific period, many succumbed to saltwater poisoning, exposure to the elements, dehydration and relentless shark attacks.

After seemingly endless hours of agony, only 316 sailors were finally rescued, and the series of tragic events resulted in the greatest loss of life involving a single ship in the history of the US Navy.

SERVICE WITH DISTINCTION

The last days of the Indianapolis and the cruiser's tragic demise have been the subject of controversy and examination for decades. However, prior to its unfortunate end the 10,110-ton Portland-class heavy cruiser, second of three launched in its class, compiled an illustrious service record, earning 10 battle stars during World War II and serving periodically as the flagship of the US Fifth Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral Raymond A Spruance.

The Indianapolis was laid down by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation on 31 March 1930, launched on 7 November 1931, commissioned on 15 November 1932 and named for the capital city of the state of Indiana. The state-of-the-art warship was sleek and impressive, capable of a top speed of 32.7 knots and armed with nine eight-inch main guns, eight secondary five-inch cannon and an array of other weapons. In July 1933, the Indianapolis welcomed President Franklin D Roosevelt aboard, transporting the American leader and six members of his cabinet from Campobello Island, New Brunswick to Annapolis, Maryland.

> "GO GET US SOME LIFE JACKETS. THIS THING'S JUMPING MIGHTY BAD, AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN"
>
> Seaman First Class Felton Outland

The Indianapolis was outfitted to serve as a flagship and assumed that role with the US Navy Scouting Force 1 off the California coast during the autumn of 1933. President Roosevelt boarded once again in 1934 for a naval review, and for a third time in November 1936 during a goodwill tour of South America.

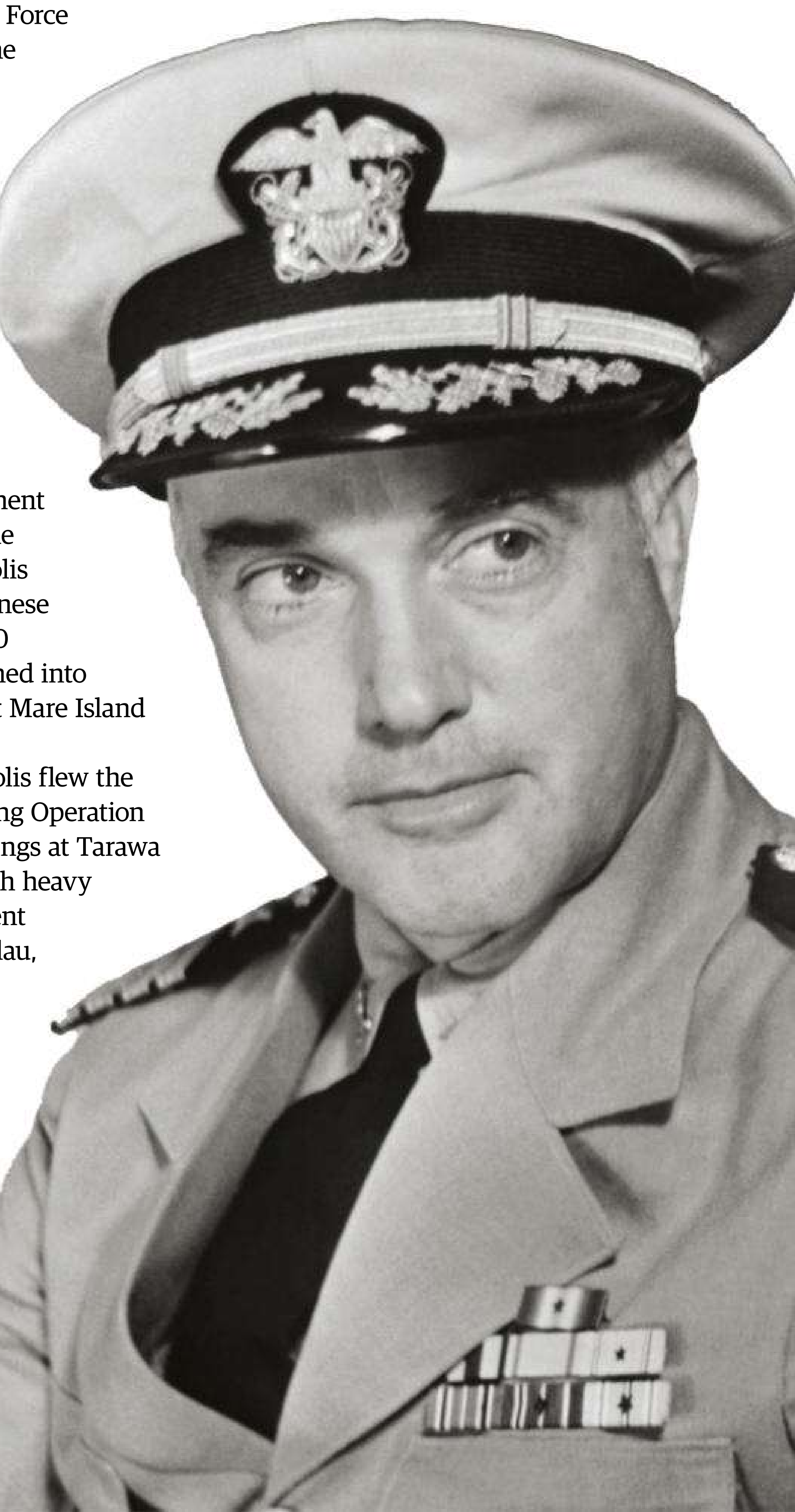
WORLD WAR II SERVICE

When Japanese aircraft attacked the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on 7 December 1941, the Indianapolis was off Johnston Atoll leading Task Force 3 in a bombardment exercise. The heavy cruiser joined Task Force 12 in the fruitless search for the enemy carrier force that had launched the destructive raid, and returned to Pearl Harbor on 13 December.

In the spring of 1942, the Indianapolis served as an escort for the aircraft carrier USS Lexington during operations in the waters off New Guinea, and that summer the cruiser headed to Aleutian waters, participating in the bombardment of Japanese installations on the island of Kiska. The Indianapolis intercepted and sank the Japanese transport Akagane Maru on 20 February 1943, and later steamed into San Francisco Bay for a refit at Mare Island Naval Shipyard.

That autumn, the Indianapolis flew the flag of Admiral Spruance during Operation Galvanic, supporting the landings at Tarawa Atoll in the Gilbert Islands with heavy gunfire. Throughout subsequent operations in the Marshall, Palau, and Caroline Islands, the Indianapolis continued as Fifth Fleet flagship. During action off the Carolines, her anti-aircraft gunners shot down a Japanese torpedo bomber.

In the spring of 1944, the Indianapolis supported



BELOW Captain McVay was court-martialed after the sinking

US Marine landings in the Marianas archipelago, bombarding the island of Saipan. During the Battle of the Philippine Sea in June, the cruiser's anti-aircraft guns shot down another Japanese plane, and subsequently the Indianapolis returned to Mare Island for another wartime refit.

In early 1945, the Indianapolis was assigned to the navy's fast carrier task force under Admiral Marc Mitscher and participated as an escort during numerous air raids against the Japanese home islands and the capital of Tokyo. This action was followed by fire support during the US landings on Iwo Jima in the Volcano Islands. While supporting further operations at Okinawa in the Ryukyu Islands, the Indianapolis was struck by a Japanese bomb and the enemy pilot crashed his plane into the port side of the after main deck, inflicting significant damage. The Indianapolis then steamed back to Mare Island for extensive repairs.

PACIFIC DESTINY

As the repairs were concluding, Captain Charles Butler McVay, commanding officer of the Indianapolis, received orders to conduct a top-secret mission. Details of the cargo to be transported to the island of Tinian in the Marianas were withheld from the crew, and speculation was rampant as to the purpose of their sortie.

The Indianapolis weighed anchor from Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco Bay on 16 July 1945, with components of the Little Boy atomic bomb aboard. The heavy cruiser completed the first leg of its voyage in just over three days, arriving at Pearl Harbor on the 19th. From there, the swift

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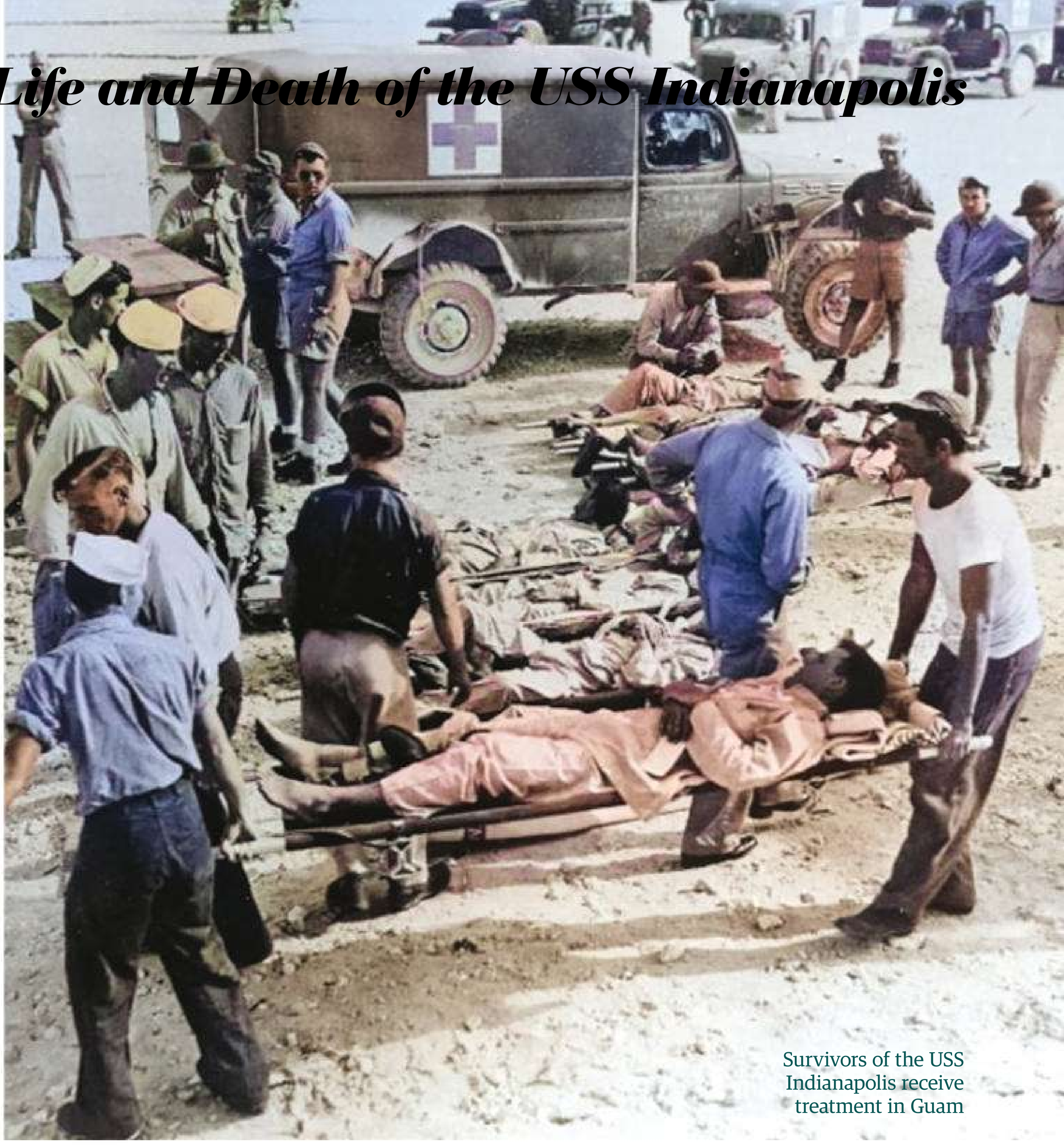
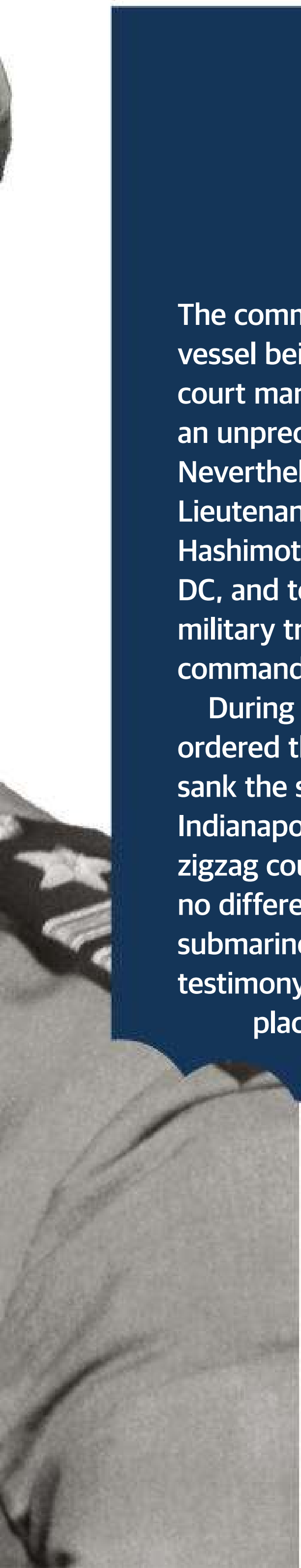


Survivors of the USS Indianapolis receive treatment in Guam



THE ENEMY'S TESTIMONY

Lieutenant Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto, captain of the submarine I-58, helped to exonerate Captain McVay

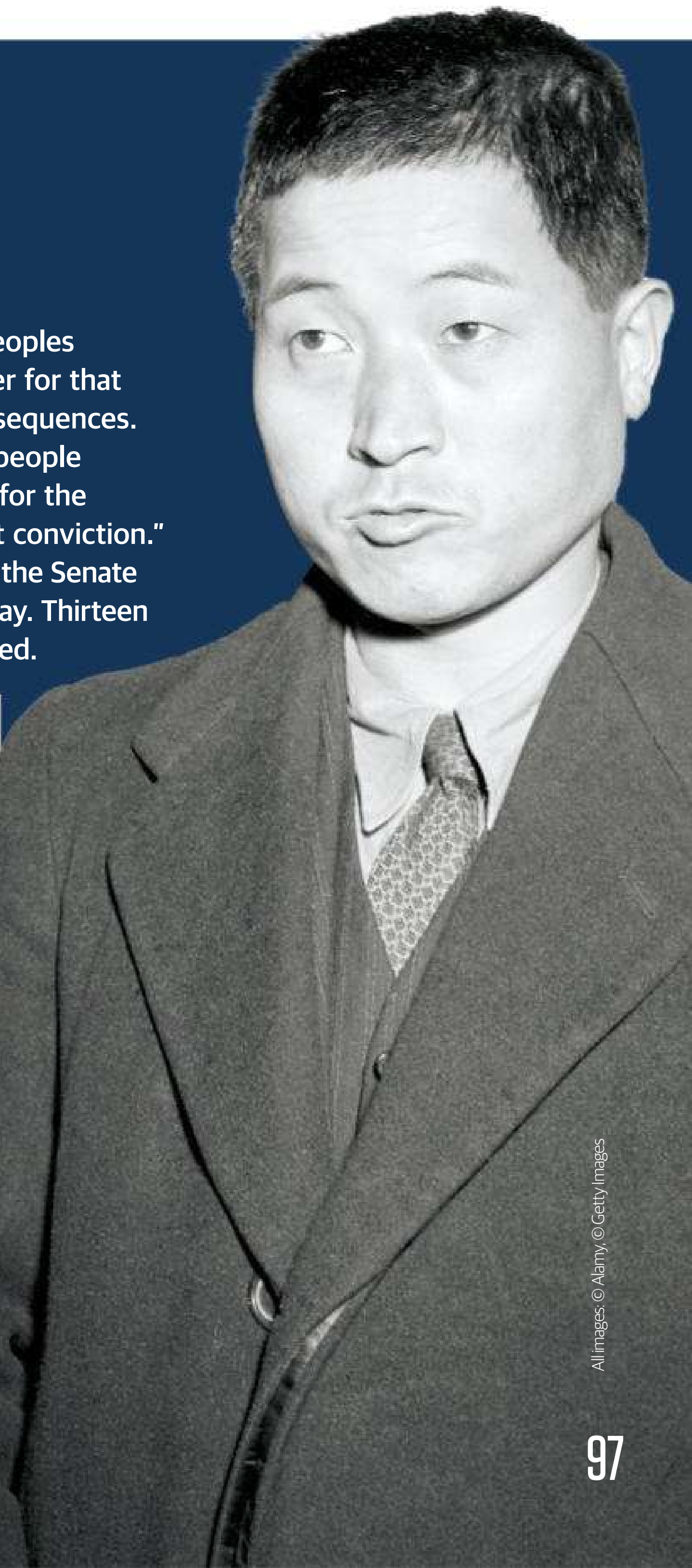
The commander of an enemy naval vessel being called to testify in the court martial of a US Navy officer was an unprecedented turn of events. Nevertheless, in November 1945 Lieutenant Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto was flown to Washington, DC, and took the stand during the military trial of Captain McVay, commander of the USS Indianapolis.

During questioning, Hashimoto, who ordered the firing of the torpedoes that sank the ship, stated that even if the Indianapolis had followed a defensive zigzag course it would have made no difference to the success of his submarine's attack. Despite Hashimoto's testimony, McVay was convicted of placing his ship at undue risk.

Decades later, Hashimoto intervened once again. Senator John Warner, chairman of the Senate Committee On Armed Services, was preparing to ask the Senate to vote on a resolution clearing McVay's name. Hashimoto wrote him a letter that convinced Warner to move forward.

The 90-year-old Hashimoto wrote that he joined the "brave men who survived the sinking of the Indianapolis… in urging that your national legislature clear their captain's name… Our peoples have forgiven each other for that terrible war and its consequences. Perhaps it is time your people forgave Captain McVay for the humiliation of his unjust conviction."

On 12 October 2000, the Senate voted to exonerate McVay. Thirteen days later, Hashimoto died.



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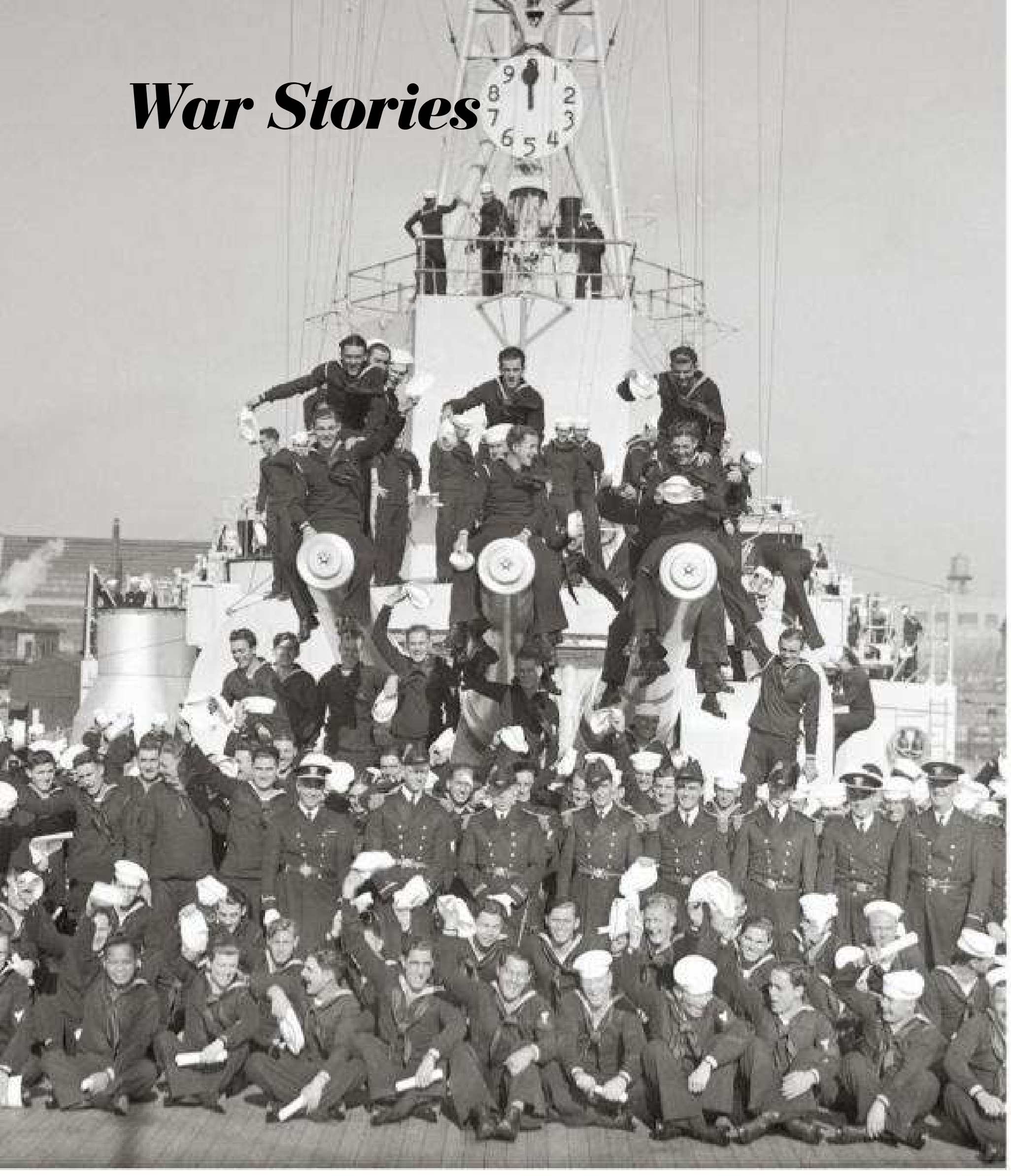


Indianapolis reached Tinian on the 26 July. The delivery of the vital cargo had been accomplished in just 10 days.

Two days later, the Indianapolis made port at the island of Guam, and numerous crewmen were transferred from the vessel while replacements came aboard. Captain McVay got underway once again on 26 July, en route to join Task Force 95 in Philippine waters.

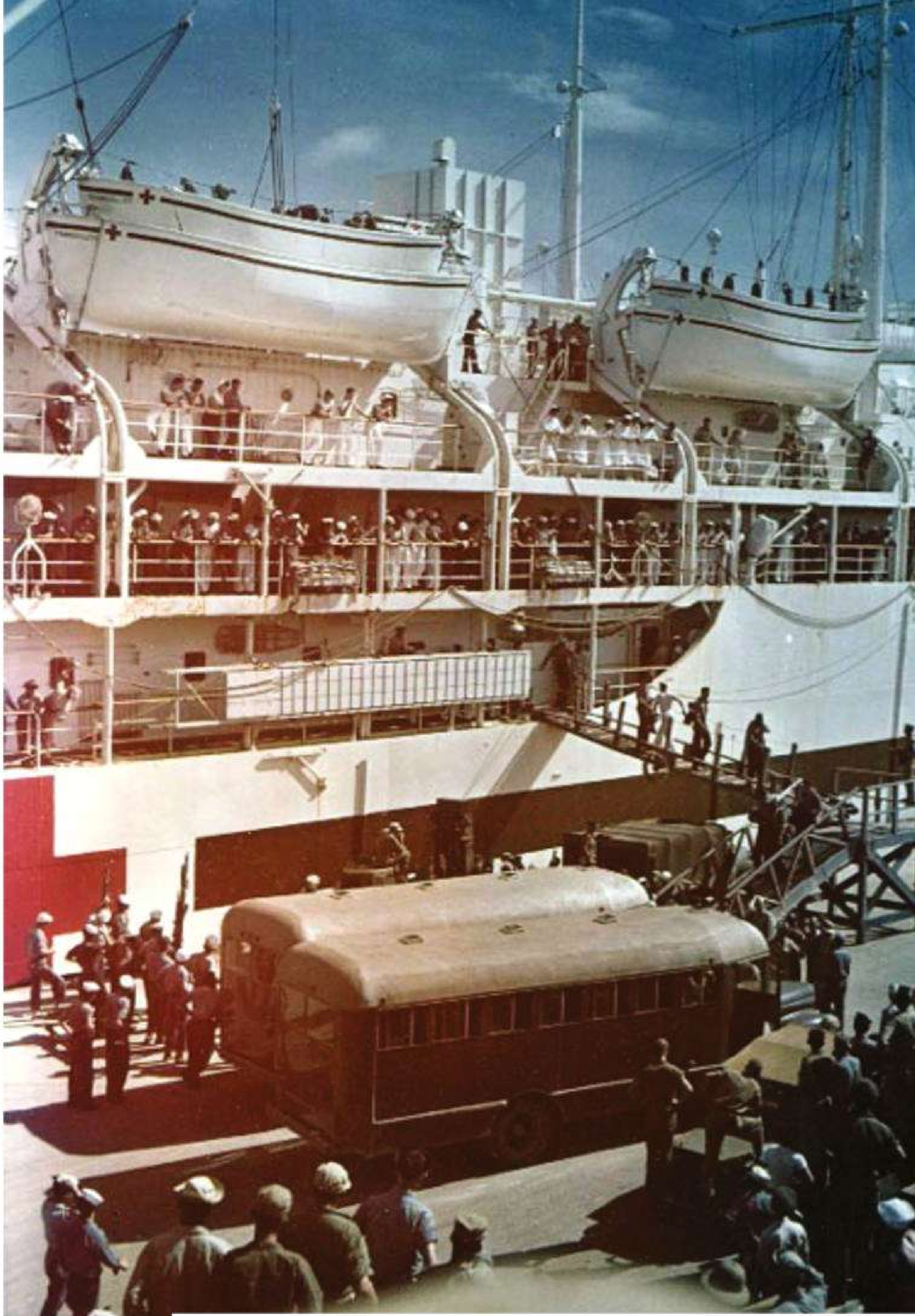
Just after midnight on 30 July, as the Indianapolis had completed roughly half the voyage to the vicinity of the island of Leyte in the Philippines, the heavy cruiser fell victim to torpedoes fired from Japanese submarine I-58. Lieutenant Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto, the submarine's commander, had stalked the Indianapolis for some time, believing he had an American battleship in his sights.

According to *The Washington Post* newspaper, a sonar operator aboard I-58 had picked up the faint sound of dishes rattling in the galley aboard the Indianapolis from a range of about 10km. As the distance between the vessels steadily closed, Hashimoto's breath quickened. At 12:04am, he ordered a spread of six torpedoes fired from less than 1,400 metres - point-blank range.

The deadly missiles hissed toward their target, and moments later the first torpedo slammed into the heavy cruiser's starboard bow. In seconds, a second torpedo rocked the Indianapolis amidships. Dozens of sailors were killed instantly. Others were tossed from their bunks by the tremendous explosion.

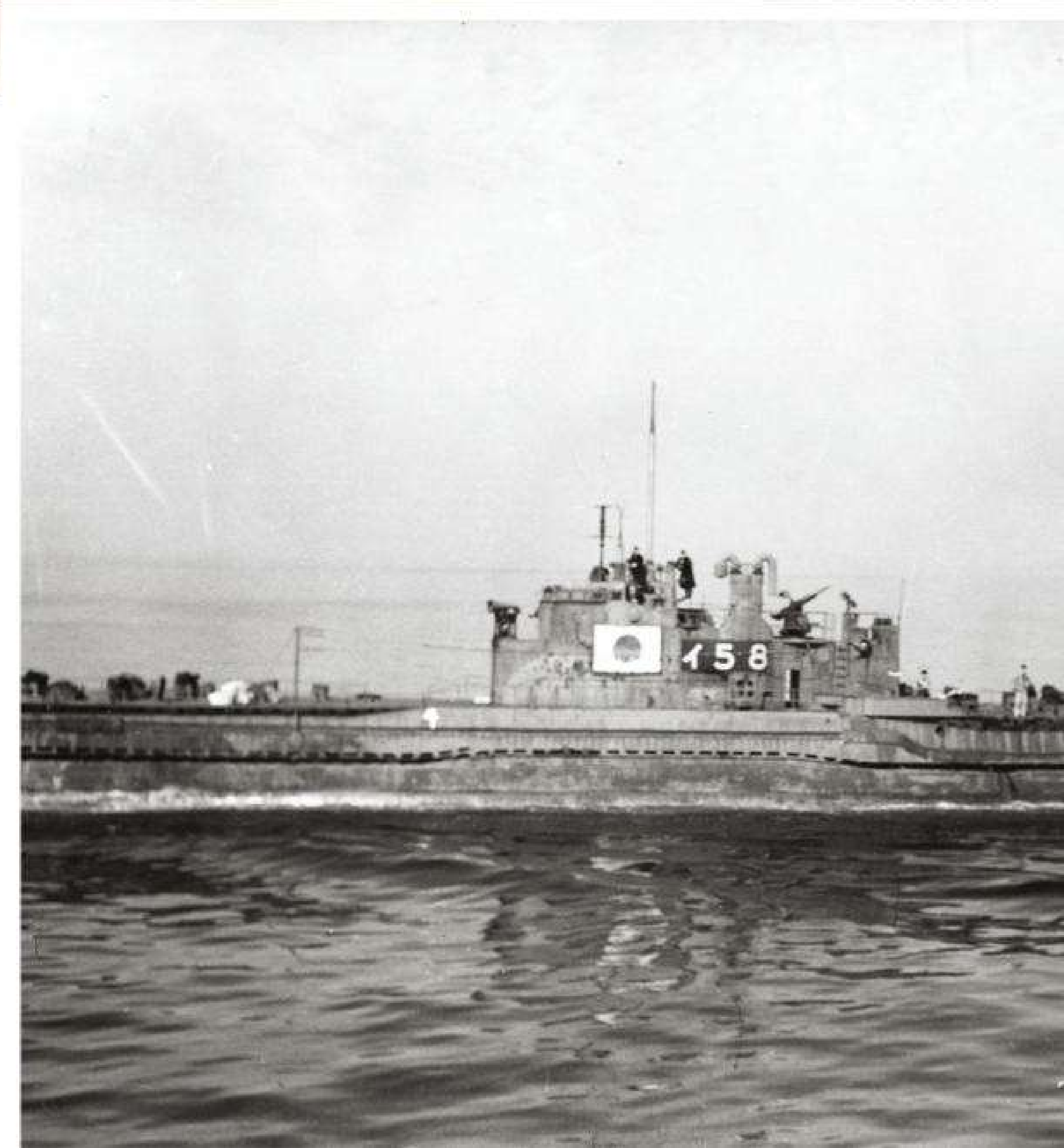
Seaman First Class Felton Outland remembered: "I asked my friend George Abbott, after the ship got hit, I says: 'Go get us some life jackets. This thing's jumping mighty bad, and I don't know what's going to happen.' George went, and he come back in a few minutes and had one life jacket, so he gave me that one. He hung around a minute or two and he said: 'I think I'll go get another one.' I said: 'I think you better.' He did, but I didn't ever see him again."

As the Indianapolis settled by the bow, hundreds of sailors, Captain McVay among them, were thrown or jumped into the sea. Many of them were covered with oil from the cruiser's ruptured fuel tanks. The Indianapolis rolled over and then its stern lifted high into the air, propellers still turning. The last plunge occurred with remarkable swiftness, and the survivors were left in darkness with little in the way of provisions or lifeboats. Their ordeal was just beginning.

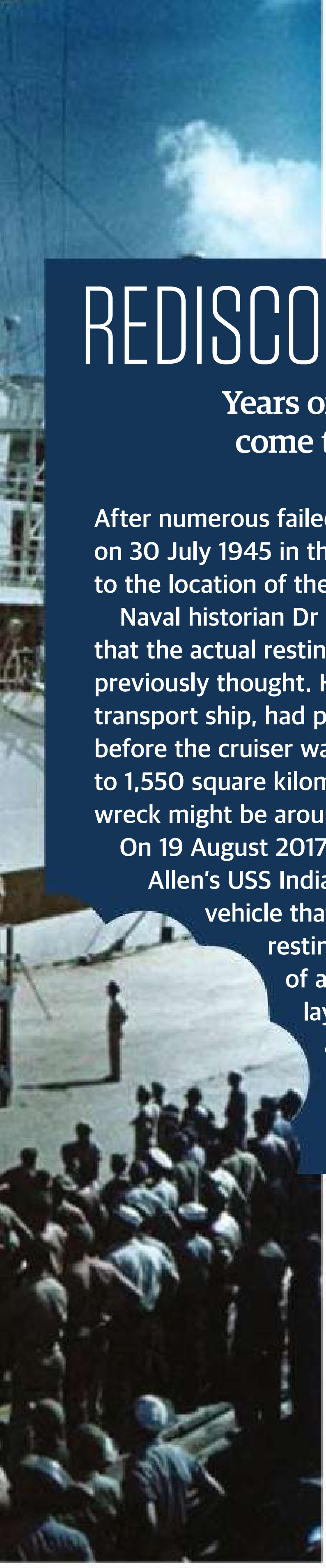


ABOVE-LEFT The heavy cruiser served as flagship of the Fifth Fleet during WWII

ABOVE Survivors are brought ashore from the hospital ship USS Tranquillity at Guam, 8 August 1945



RIGHT The Japanese submarine I-58, which sank the USS Indianapolis, awaits being decommissioned in 1946



REDISCOVERING THE INDIANAPOLIS

Years of searching for the lost heavy cruiser had come to nothing, until a breakthrough in 2016

After numerous failed attempts to locate the wreckage of the USS Indianapolis, sunk on 30 July 1945 in the Philippine Sea by the Japanese submarine I-58, new clues as to the location of the ship surfaced in 2016.

Naval historian Dr Richard Hulver conducted research that led him to believe that the actual resting place of the Indianapolis was further west than had been previously thought. Hulver's investigations revealed that the LST 779, a US Navy transport ship, had passed the Indianapolis on 29 July, approximately 11 hours before the cruiser was torpedoed. This new information narrowed the search area to 1,550 square kilometres of ocean (still a huge challenge) and indicated that the wreck might be around 40km away from the previously concentrated search area.

On 19 August 2017 the research vessel Petrel, flagship of entrepreneur Paul Allen's USS Indianapolis Project, deployed a remotely operated underwater vehicle that scoured the sea floor of the new search area. It found the resting place of the doomed warship amid the peaks and valleys of a submerged mountain range. The vessel's detached bow lay some distance away from the main wreckage, along with a lengthy debris field and the cruiser's two forward eight-inch gun turrets, which had been torn from their mounts during the descent into the 5,500-metre abyss.

> "...UNTIL AFTER THE SINKING OF INDIANAPOLIS, WHEN A NEW DIRECTIVE WAS ISSUED, THE PORT DIRECTOR, TACLOBAN, DID NOT ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY..."
>
> US Navy Court of Inquiry

INCREDIBLE SUFFERING

Approximately two-thirds of the nearly 900 men who went into the water perished during the harrowing hours that followed. Some died of wounds and others fell victim to ferocious shark attacks, which intensified after the bodies of the dead had been ravaged. Still more men died of dehydration, saltwater poisoning or simply lost their minds – letting go of flotation devices and drifting into the darkness.

On 2 August, more than three days after the sinking, a Lockheed Ventura patrol plane spotted those crewmen left alive and a rescue effort was finally mounted. Lieutenant Commander Robert Marks, piloting a Consolidated PBY Catalina flying boat, responded to a radio transmission from the Ventura, landed in heavy seas, and took 56 men aboard but was unable to get airborne. Within hours, several US Navy surface ships arrived on the scene and brought the survivors aboard. Two of those rescued died a few weeks later.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

During its 1,770km voyage from Guam, the Indianapolis was sailing alone – without escort – at the time of the I-58 attack. The rapid sinking allowed little time to send a distress signal, and confusion as to proper procedures for reporting late arrivals or non-arrivals of ships compounded the disaster. Although reports of Japanese submarine activity were received, plotters at headquarters on Guam merely tracked the anticipated course and speed of the warship. At Leyte, the expected arrival time of the Indianapolis passed but no decisive action was taken. Several personnel were later officially reprimanded for inaction, while others had simply shown little concern for the situation.

Among those who ignored the potential plight of the Indianapolis survivors was Lieutenant Stuart B Gibson, operations officer, port director at Tacloban in the Philippines. On 13 August 1945, a US Navy court of inquiry found that Gibson "considered he was not required to take any action regarding non-arrivals of combatant ships, therefore, he took none when the non-arrival of Indianapolis came to his attention... That until after the sinking of Indianapolis, when a new directive was issued, the port director, Tacloban, did not assume any responsibility regarding the arrival or non-arrival of combatant ships in that port."

Humiliated by the sinking and botched response, the US Navy sought a scapegoat for the tragic affair and Captain McVay was court-martialed. He was charged with failing to order his crew to abandon ship and placing the Indianapolis at undue risk, or 'hazarding' the ship, due to failure to sail in a zigzag pattern to potentially disrupt a submarine attack. McVay was convicted of the second charge, although Hashimoto was called to testify and stated that the zigzag tactic would not have saved the cruiser from the torpedo attack. Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander-in-chief Pacific Fleet and later chief of naval operations, set aside the conviction and allowed the promotion of McVay to rear admiral upon his retirement in 1949.

McVay was the only US Navy officer to be court-martialed following the loss of a ship under his command during World War II. While many of the survivors of the Indianapolis tragedy held their commanding officer in high esteem, refusing to blame McVay for the sinking, others were less forgiving. For years after his retirement, the commander received letters from the families of deceased Indianapolis sailors blaming him for the deaths of their loved ones.

At the age of 70, the retired McVay could no longer live with the anguish caused by the incident. On 6 November 1968, he dressed in the standard-issue US Navy uniform, loaded a .38-calibre revolver, walked out the door of his home in Litchfield, Connecticut, and sat down on a stone step. Moments later he shot himself in the temple. When McVay's body was discovered by the gardener, his hand was clutching a toy sailor, possibly given to him as a child.

EXONERATION AT LONG LAST

The final chapter of the Indianapolis saga has yet to be written. As of early 2022, two survivors of the tragedy were still living. Yet some measure of closure was achieved in 1996, nearly three decades after McVay's suicide.

Hunter Scott, a sixth grade middle school student, chose the story of the Indianapolis as a history project, and his work became a catalyst for the reexamination of McVay's service record. Michael Monroney, a Congressional lobbyist and son of a former senator from the state of Oklahoma, was instrumental in an effort to clear McVay's name. Navy Captain William Toti, commander of the nuclear attack submarine USS Indianapolis, and Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire, brought the issue before the US Senate Committee On Armed Services in 1999; in October 2000 the United States Congress passed a resolution exonerating McVay of negligence or wrongdoing in the loss of the heavy cruiser.

The USS Indianapolis lies more than 5,400 metres beneath the surface of the Philippine Sea. The wreckage was discovered in 2017 during search operations led by entrepreneur and former Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen. ○

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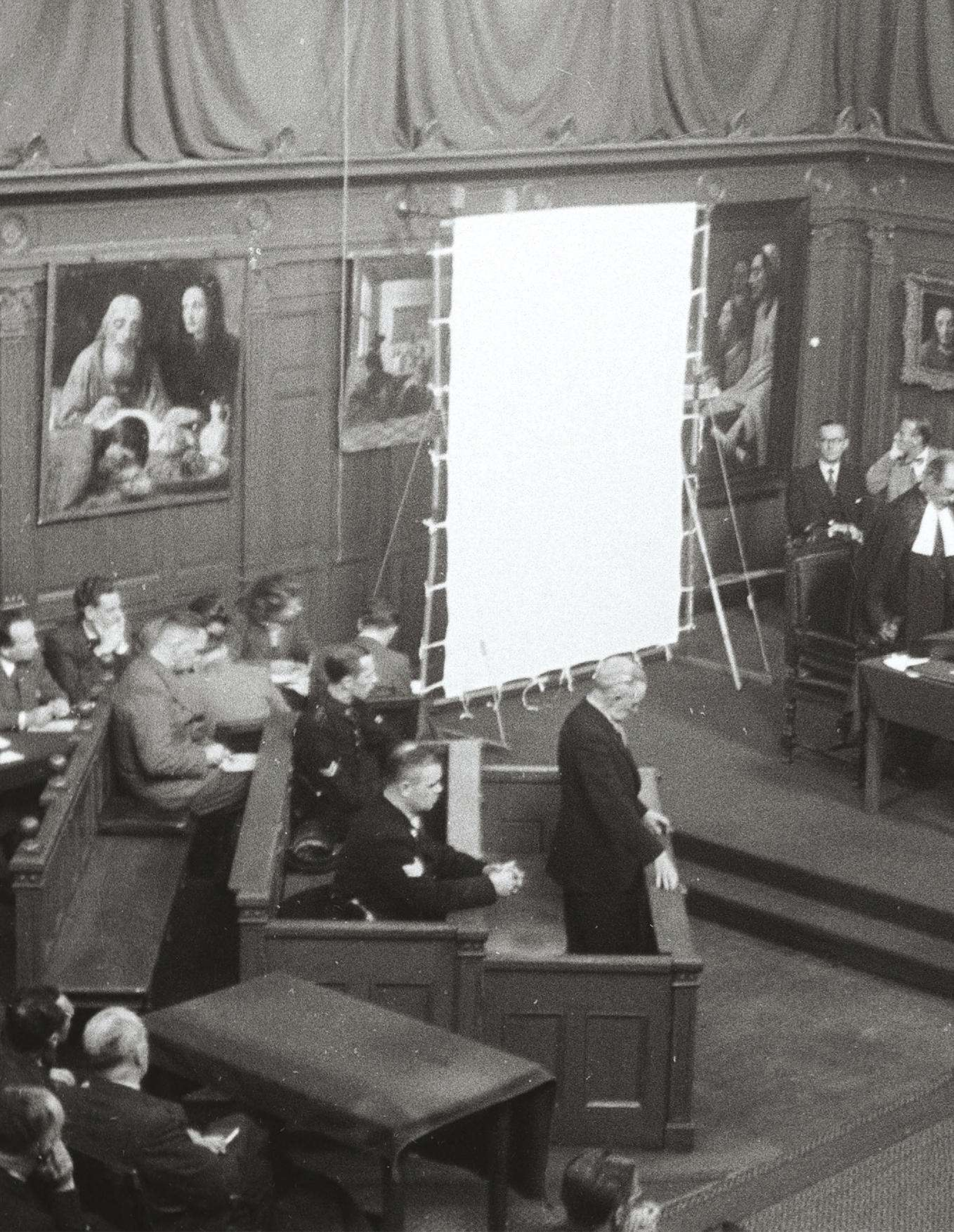
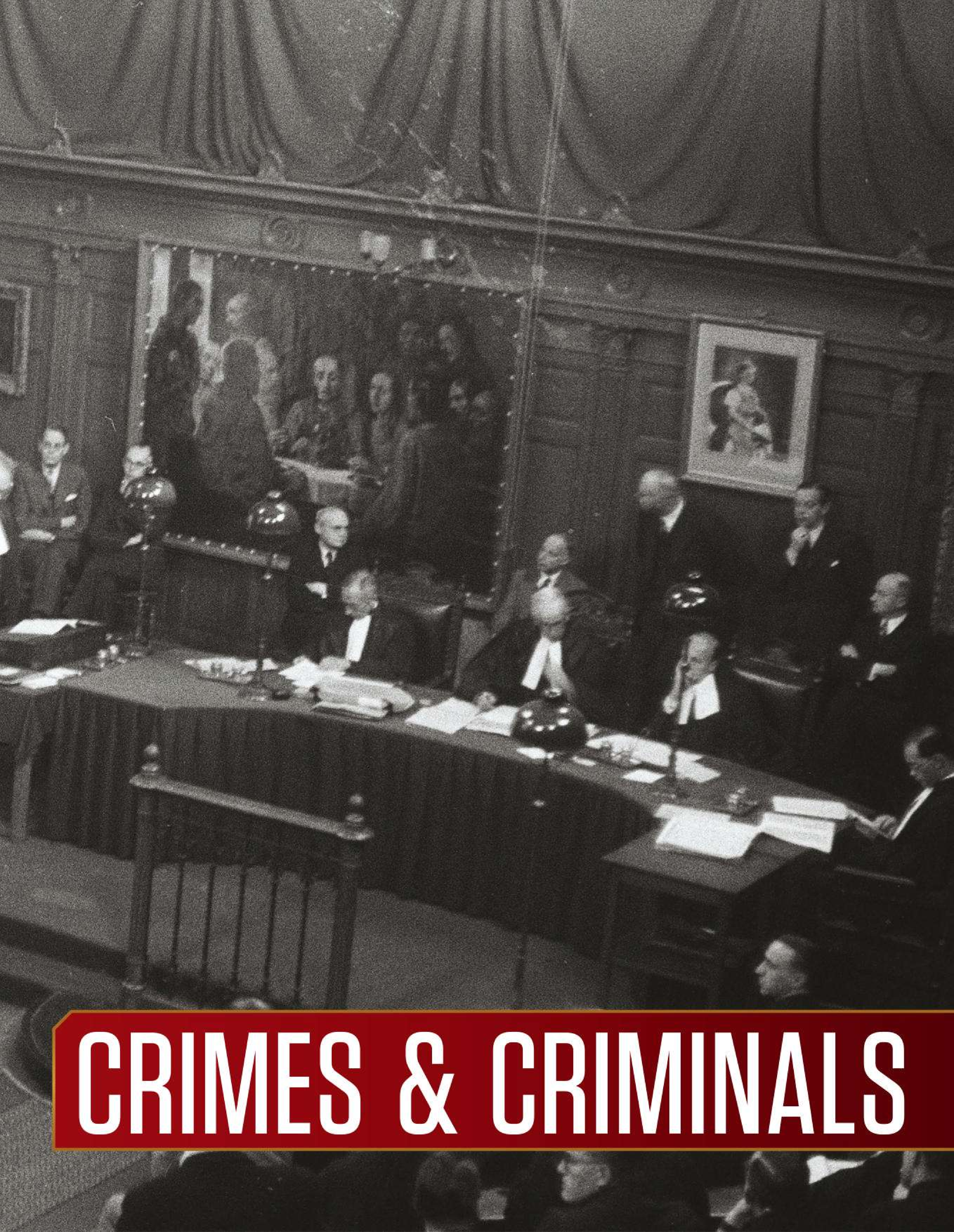
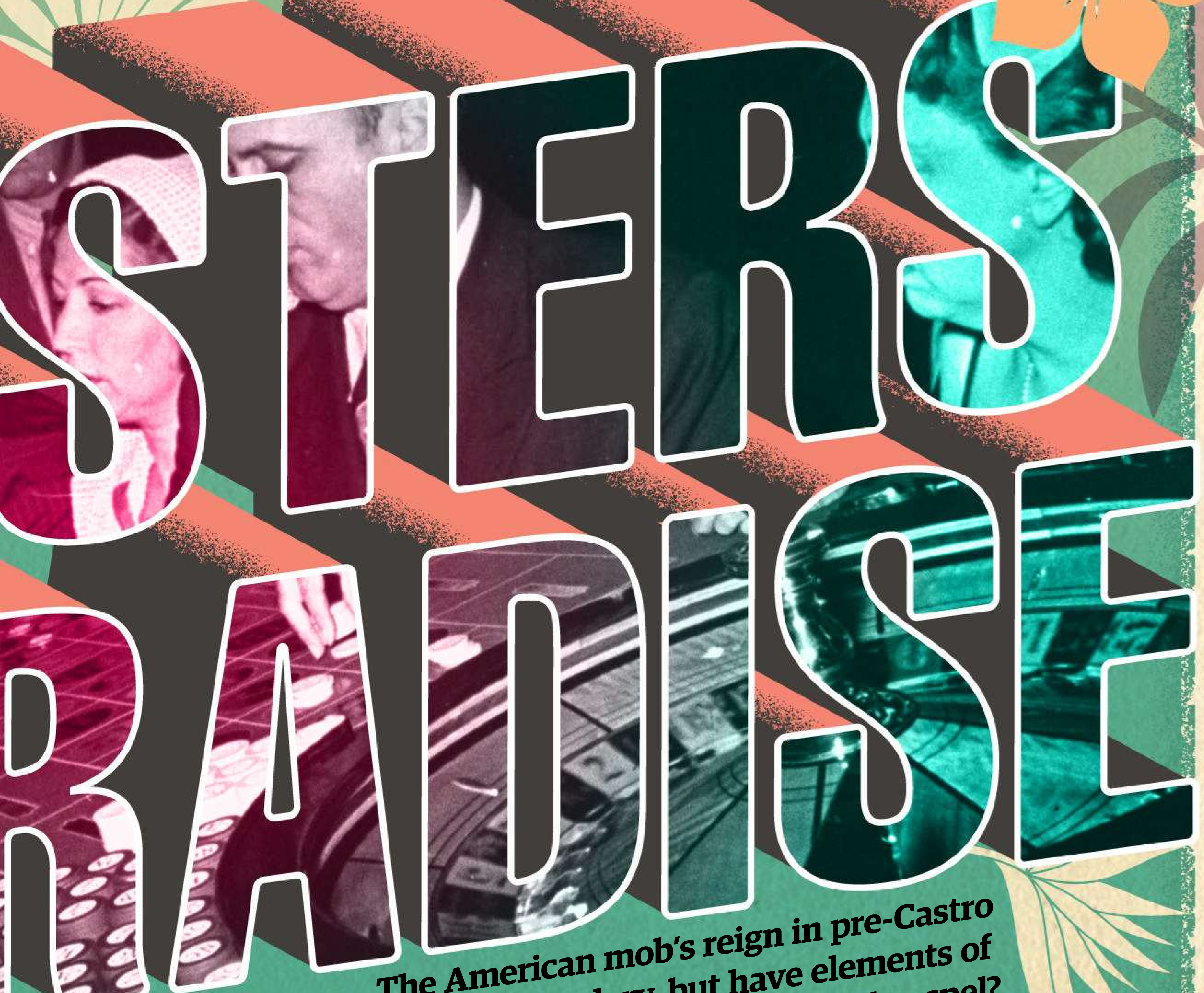




CRIMES & CRIMINALS

WELCOME TO
GANG
PA



The American mob's reign in pre-Castro Cuba is legendary, but have elements of mythos been spun into historical gospel?

Written by Christian Cipollini

A regal dictator calmly addresses a crowd during a New Year's Eve celebration; he speaks with stoic poise, hoping to make a grand exit as low key as possible. As he departs, followed by confidants and staff in step, guests process the grim reality of the situation and panic soon paints their expressions. They rapidly shuffle out and the scene cuts to ragtag rebels motoring through the streets in their own celebratory way. *The Godfather Part II* cinematically captured both the exotic beauty and maligned undercurrents of political turmoil and a mobbed up Havana masterfully, but that was a fictionalised tale with characters only loosely based on the actual criminal overlords. So then, who were the real people involved, and how did the organised crime's virtual utopia in Cuba come to a bitter end?

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PICTURE WORTH A THOUSAND IMPLICATIONS

Sinatra never denied his presence in Cuba, yet the photos instigated decades of conjecture and allegations

When the crooner landed in Havana on 11 February 1947, a newsreel team happened to be there too. A still frame shows (according to government agents at the time) Sinatra situated near Chicago gangsters Joe and Rocco Fischetti (a third Fischetti, Charlie, was also on the flight). That image furthered suspicion and narratives formulated by unfriendly columnists and agents of the FBI and Narcotics Bureau. Sinatra already bore bad blood with some gossip columnists, but the Feds to that point only had him on radar for reasons relating to the 'red scare' (communist rhetoric). Everything changed quickly when American writer Robert Ruark outed Lucky Luciano's presence in Havana and implied Sinatra and the kingpin were pals. If the primary target of Ruark's war of attrition was Luciano, with Sinatra secondary, then columnist Lee Mortimer's was the flip side. He upped the ante against the singer by suggesting to government contacts that Sinatra's carry-on bag (seen in the photo) was packed with a $2,000,000 gift for Luciano. Sinatra tried feverishly to douse the flames of PR hell, but it didn't help when he slugged Mortimer in a New York club two months later.

Both Sinatra and Luciano vehemently denied they ever knew each other prior to a 'chance' meeting in Cuba, but when Senator Estes Kefauver set his sights on American organised crime in the 1950s the infamous photo reappeared publicly, while a handful of 'other' photos were presented to Sinatra, allegedly depicting him hobnobbing with Luciano, the Fischettis and other 'known' gangsters. Interestingly, at least one of the purported photos disappeared. According to a 1962 FBI memo, "A photograph of Sinatra taken with two of the leading gangsters in this country was stolen from the files of the Kefauver Crime Investigation Committee not too long ago."

ABOVE Conrad 'Connie' Immerman (pictured in 1936), NY club owner and jet-setting socialite friendly with celebrities, the press and gangsters alike

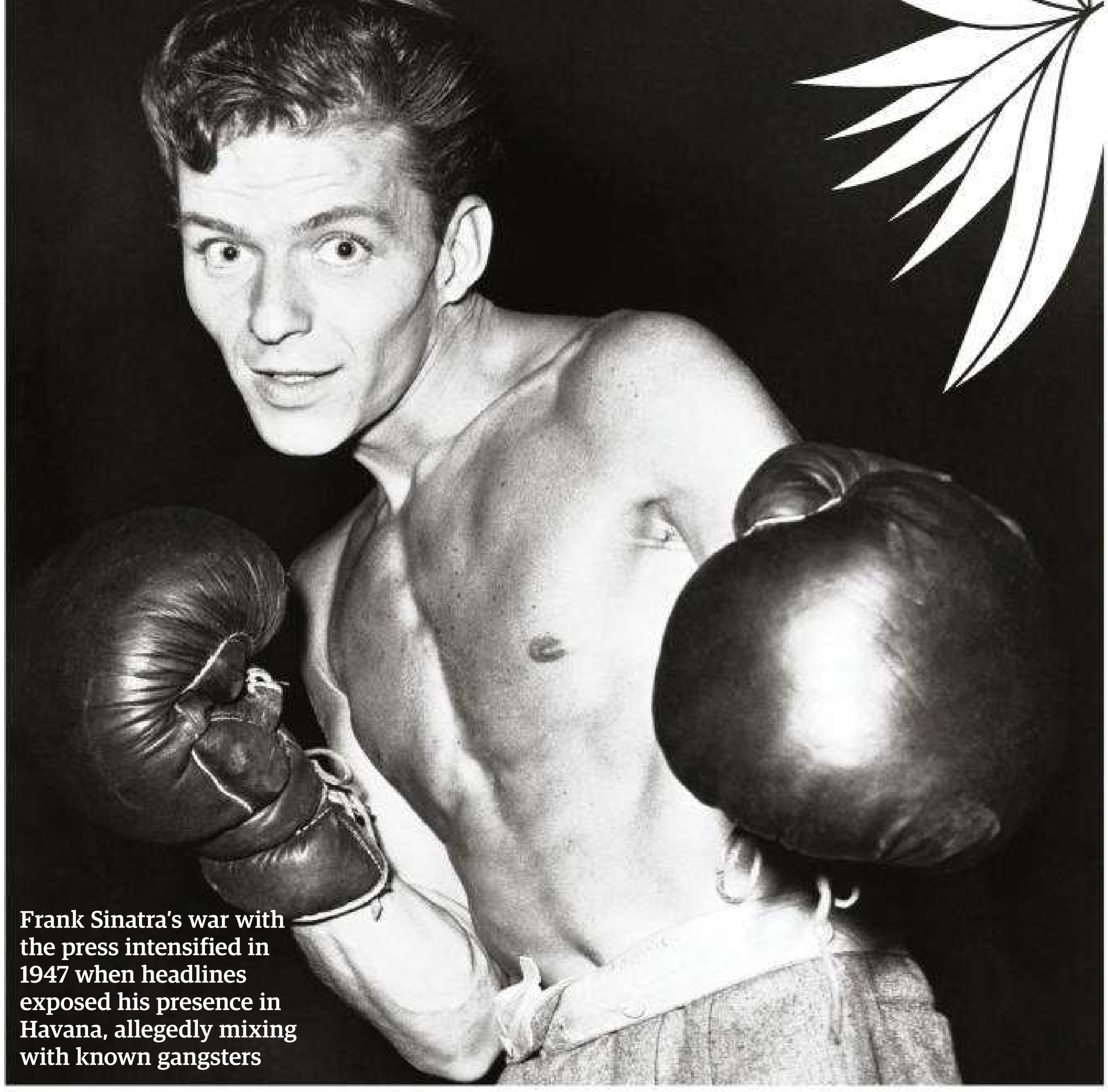
"THE TROPICAL CLIMATE, LEGAL LIQUOR, GAMBLING AND GEOGRAPHICAL STONE'S THROW BECKONED EXPANSIONIST AMERICAN MOBSTERS"

Underworld figures, not unlike tourists from high society, were drawn to the island nation quite early in the 20th century. "The port of Havana has been an extremely important, and strategic, port since the 1500s," explains Scott Deitche, author of *Cigar City Mafia: A Complete History of the Tampa Underworld*. "By the early 1900s Havana was the most important port of trade with Florida as well as other Gulf ports, like New Orleans, due to proximity." Frequency of travel increased with the onset of Prohibition in 1919. The tropical climate, legal liquor, gambling establishments and geographical stone's throw (located just 90 nautical miles from the United States) beckoned expansionist American mobsters looking to mix business and pleasure.

THE EARLY YEARS

Gangsters created the international pipelines of smuggling routes, established distribution hubs and mastered the art of political payoffs to ultimately provide the supply to a ravenous demand of contraband during Prohibition. Cuba was prime real estate for adding diversity in revenue streams. Thomas Hunt, publisher of organised crime history journal *Informer*, sums up the mob's Prohibition mindset: "The presence of travellers with plenty of money and a desire for excitement and experiences deemed illicit at home was certainly viewed as a great opportunity for underworld figures."

Much of what's been revealed about organised crime's presence in pre-Castro Cuba originated by piecing together official documents kept by government agencies (FBI, FBN, State Department, etc), travel logs (ship and air manifests) and the accounts of investigative reporters. In a few instances even the mobsters themselves divulged their insights, albeit rare and



Frank Sinatra's war with the press intensified in 1947 when headlines exposed his presence in Havana, allegedly mixing with known gangsters

ABOVE Rigged games are bad publicity for any gambling establishment, so Cuban officials welcomed the honest practices of mobster Meyer Lansky

often self-serving. It should also be noted: none of the respective sources are 100 percent accurate – the Feds had an agenda, the press had some bias, travel logs are basically impartial but can't account for any surreptitious trips or false documentation.

Gangsters hailing from all over the continental United States visited Cuba. A veritable who's who of gangland lords with ties to Cuba have been documented, including Tampa's Santo Trafficante Jr., New York's Meyer and Jake Lansky, Frank Costello, Frank Erickson, Phil Kastel, Vincent Alo, the Chicago Outfit's Ralph Capone and the Fischetti brothers, former globetrotting drug trafficker George Uffner, the Murder Inc. co-founding Benjamin 'Bugsy' Siegel and recognised top dog himself – Salvatore Lucania, aka Charles 'Lucky' Luciano.

Prohibition's end in 1933 didn't disrupt the mob's business because they already diversified into the narcotic, gambling and sex trafficking rackets. The path for gangsters to expand investments in Cuba (more specifically its capital Havana) is often attributed during the reign of Fulgencio Batista, beginning in 1933. After staging a successful coup against then-president Grau, Batista pulled the government strings largely from behind the scenes at the time, controlling a series of installed presidents. Then, in 1940, Batista stepped into the forefront, campaigning for and winning the presidential election. Even after Batista's four-year term ended, the criminal factions were generally unfettered until the onset of World War II, which obviously interrupted commerce and tourism on a global scale.

POST-WAR SENSATIONALISM

The agency most attuned to mob activities during this period was the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, which fell under the Department of the Treasury. Harry J Anslinger served as its chief for decades and played the cat and mouse game decidedly differently from his counterparts in the FBI. While neither Anslinger nor the FBI chief J Edgar Hoover explicitly used the word 'mafia' during that period, Hoover's policy was to basically deny the actual existence of a 'mafia' (note: 'mob' is the broad term for the larger alliance of multi-ethnic gangs, e.g. Italian, Jewish, Irish, etc, whereas 'mafia' specifically denotes the faction of Italian extraction gangs). Further distinctions between the two entities included the FBN's street-level insurgency and surveillance tactics, i.e. blending in, whereas the FBI maintained a more polished appearance and by-the-book modus operandi, at least on the surface. Both agencies kept 'secret' records and dossiers. The FBN's databank included a detailed 'black list' of suspected traffickers, which documented underworld alliances, ethnic subsets and broadly outlined the 'organisational' groupings of suspects.

One such individual on the FBN's watch list was exiled Charles 'Lucky' Luciano. After serving just a little over nine years of a 30 to 50 year term, Luciano's sentence was commuted in 1946 – with the stipulation he be deported to Italy and not set foot in the United States. The FBN suspected Luciano would scheme his way back to the Americas and they were right, although not yet aware of it (apparently the agency lost track of him for several months). Luciano secured a passport and visas for a late October trip overseas – final destination Cuba. His arrangements were purportedly assisted by efforts of several Cuban officials with gambling interests, namely Dr. Indalecio Pertierra, Carlos Miranda and Senator Eduardo Suarez Rivas.

Luciano's life in Havana remained under the radar from October 1946 through early February 1947. Then, on 11 February, America's heartthrob Frank Sinatra arrived in Havana with three of his friends – Chicago gangsters Joe, Rocco and Charlie Fischetti. The event soon turned into international intrigue (Sinatra scandal), which in turn systematically spelled the downfall of the mob's most infamous leader (Luciano eventually got deported) and created the foundation for a tale of mythical proportions that has been widely accepted as canon… the mob's Havana convention.

A GRAND SUMMIT

The story tells of a week filled with underworld assemblage, hedonistic exploits and assassination plots fleshed out, that began on 22 December 1946. Breaking down the facts, many heads of crime groups visited Havana, the mafiosi and the top people from the Jewish mob. This is all documented and verified. Also true,

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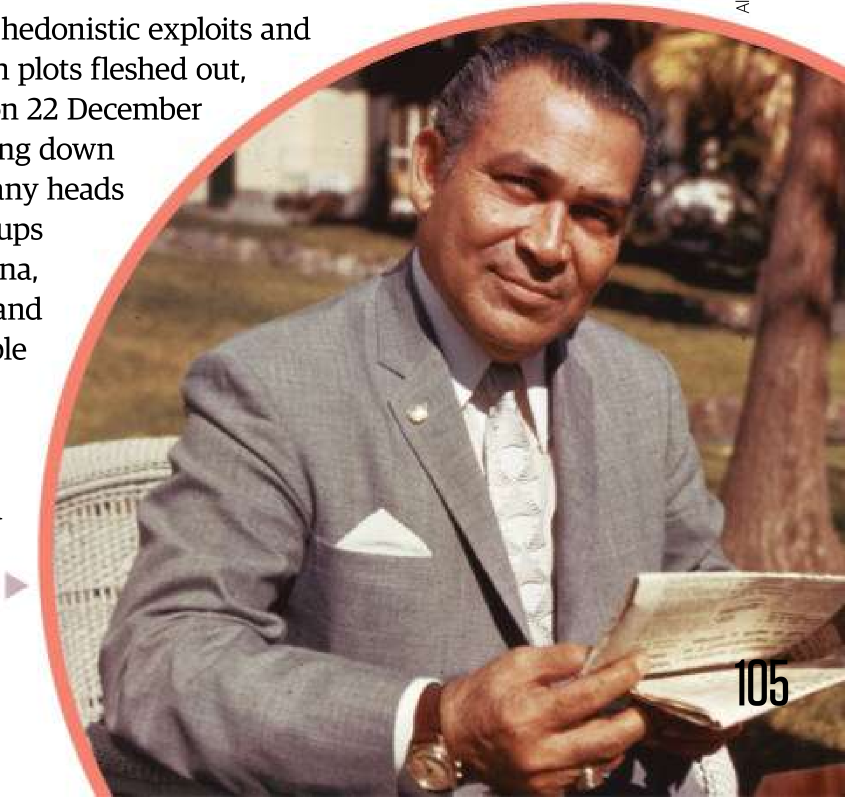


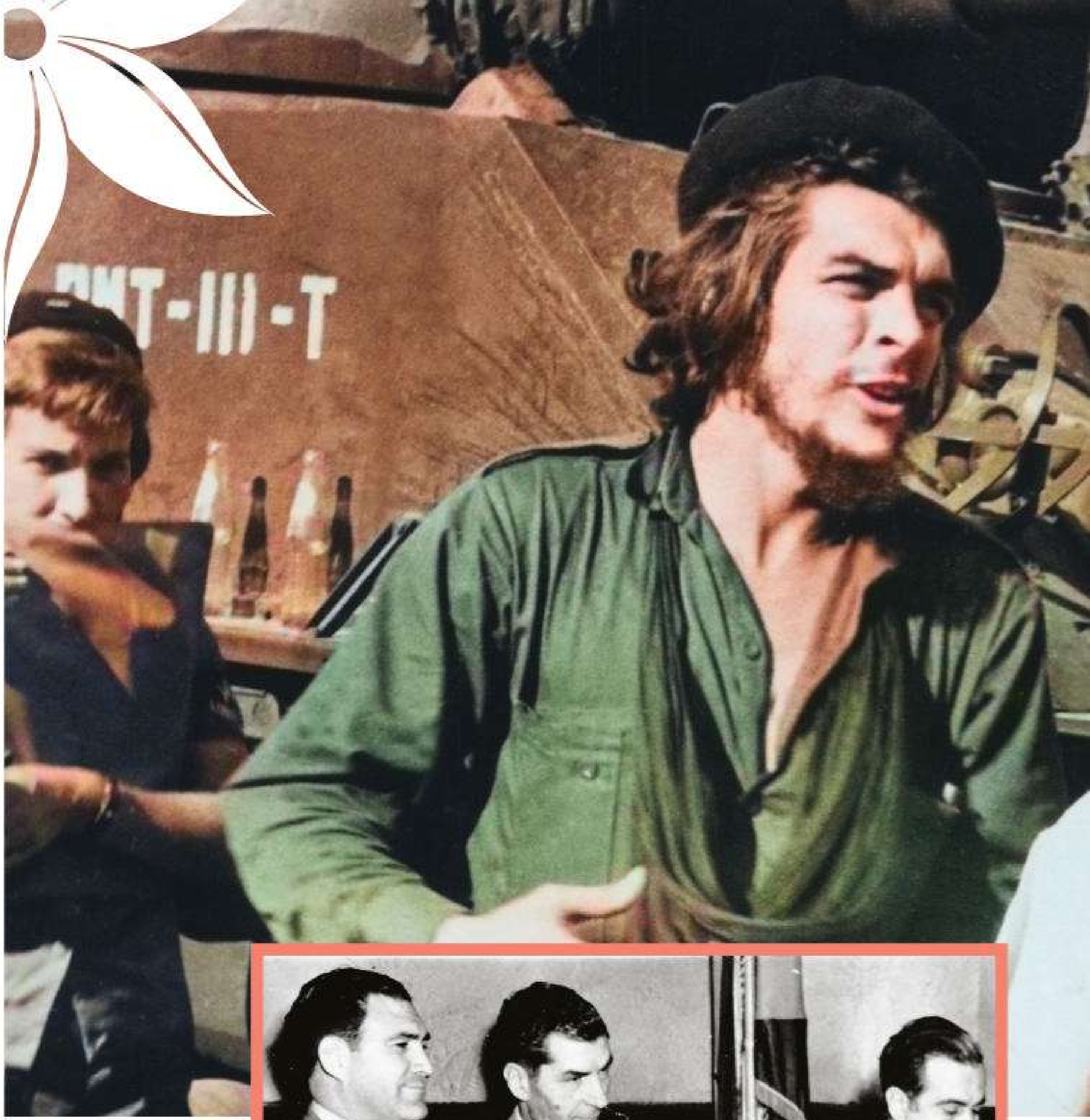
RIGHT Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista, who was overthrown by rebels in 1959

All images: © Christian Cipollini, © Getty Images

many of them personally visited with Lucky Luciano, on different dates, and rarely in groups larger than two or three. History has shown that the normally secretive nature and aversion tactics of the mob have, on occasion, been carelessly unheeded or ignored by even the most astute mobsters. So-called 'mob summits' where bosses convene and collude together in large groups are uncommon, yet have certainly been documented (the 1929 Atlantic City meeting is still hotly debated, but the almost comical folly of scattering mafiosi during a raid on a 1958 meeting in Apalachin, New York made headlines worldwide). Nevertheless, the tales of a big congregation in Cuba has detractors, and for good reason.

"The growing list of underworld figures who met with Luciano in Havana and the tale of the 'wild party' seemed to merge over time," says Thomas Hunt. "Official travel records established December of 1946 as the time of brief Havana visits by US mafiosi in small numbers. Frank Costello and Meyer Lansky went for a couple of days at the start of the month; Joe Adonis and Vincent Alo went about a week later; Moretti, Mangano and Catena visited in the middle of December." He says the "incremental variations" to the story started gaining momentum just prior to a major turning point in organised crime investigation, "though the visit of the Fischettis and Sinatra certainly occurred in February 1947, their visit and the entire fabricated convention was moved back in time to late 1946," adding, "It's tough to see how this made sense to anyone." Hunt theorises the development of a composite or blended version of dates and facts may have been to accommodate the hearings. (Hunt also refers to claims made in the 2011 memoir of Bill Bonanno, son of the mafia boss Joe Bonanno. In the book, Bonanno confirms a meeting in December 1946, where the subject of Luciano's future role and the dilemma with Bugsy Siegel's Las Vegas project were discussed, but states the small enclave met on mobster Willie Moretti's yacht, docked in Miami.)

Over time, says Hunt, all the manipulated writings, recollections and variants from 1947 to 1966 eventually came full circle. "It turned out that was just the foundation for the complex and detailed fabrication published a decade later in *The Last Testament of Lucky Luciano*." The 1975 bestselling release remains one of, if not the most contested, challenged and controversial mob-related books ever written.

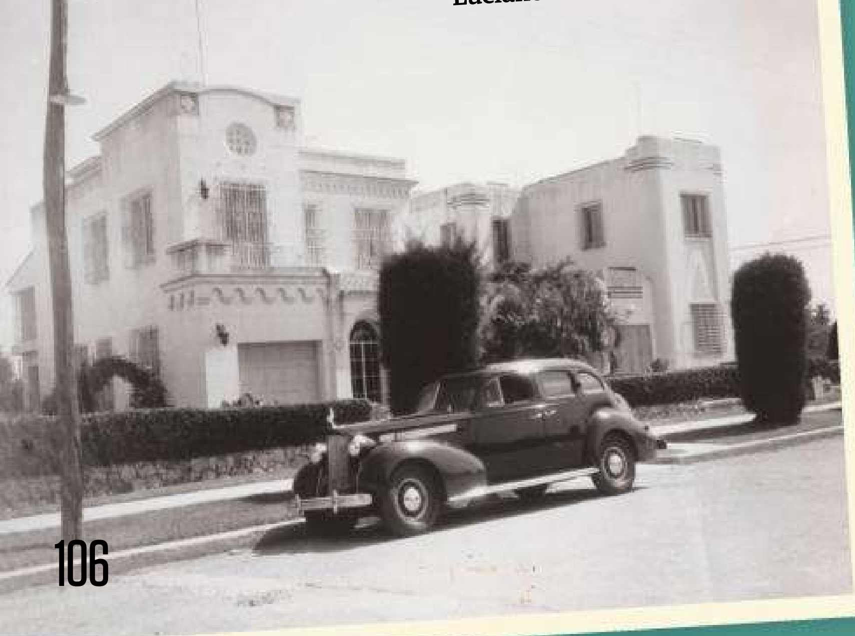


ABOVE December 1958, a rebel faction led by Ernesto 'Che' Guevara defeated the Cuban army in Santa Clara, which effectively spelled the end of Fulgencio Batista's reign

RIGHT Shortly after his arrest in Havana, Lucky Luciano (centre) appears before the press with Chief of Secret Police Benito Herrera (left) and Interior Minister Alfredo Pequeno (right)

UNLUCKY STREAK

How Lucky Luciano's Havana house of cards crumbled



Calle 30, #29, Miramar; Lucky Luciano's residence in Havana

Lucky Luciano quietly entered Cuba in October 1946 and moved into an upscale Miramar neighbourhood. Cuban officials, some in collusion, were very much aware of Luciano's presence. Things went smooth until February 1947 when a burgeoning columnist named Robert Ruark heard an infamous American gangster living it up in Havana's night life. Ruark, who in later years admitted as much, knew immediately the scoop could be life-changing. Ironically though, Ruark wasn't even sure he could positively recognise the mobster, so he asked around, finally landing on Connie Immerman – a guy who knew everyone. Probably with no maligned thought whatsoever, Immerman simply pointed out which fellow was indeed Lucky. The first (of many) articles written by Ruark about the Luciano-Sinatra intrigue was published in American papers on 20 February 1947 and drew the attention of Narcotics czar Harry Anslinger, who in turn issued a threat (through the press) of embargo on medicinal narcotics to Cuba unless they kicked Luciano out. Factually however, Anslinger (head of the Narcotics Bureau, under the Treasury Department) had no authority to embargo. Declassified State Department memos reveal they didn't even know about Anslinger's threat until Cuban officials voiced frustration and offence to the edict. FBI memos referencing the FBN's records also confirmed "no actual embargo had been placed on shipments of narcotics to Cuba, despite the statements to the contrary…" Nevertheless, the Cuban government conceded for the same reason the United States government didn't publicly disavow Anslinger's bluff – to avoid any more aggravation and potential embarrassment. Luciano was arrested on 22 February at the El Jardin cafe and a month later put aboard the Turkish freighter Bakir to sail back to Italy.

Benjamin Siegel

TOP-RIGHT Meyer Lansky (centre), called to the state watchdog committee on 12 Feb 1958 in NY

RIGHT The 1947 assassination of Benjamin 'Bugsy' Siegel produced many theories, one of which suggests the murder was ordered and agreed upon during a purported 'Havana Conference' of top mobsters in Cuba

DECADE OF DECADENCE

Neither the Sinatra scandal nor Lucky Luciano's eventual deportation had much negative effect on the mob or the casinos. However, tourism revenue took a hit when Cuban media began reporting scathing articles about unfair play at the gambling tables. Ironically, it wasn't until after Batista returned to Cuba (via another coup in 1952) and allegedly secured the mob's services that fairness in gambling was established. "Relationships between mobsters like Meyer Lansky and Santo Trafficante Jr. and Batista led to large investment of mob money into hotels and casinos, as well as the underground economy, especially prostitution and sex tourism," Scott Deitche says. "So, in reality, the Mafia era of Cuba depicted in popular culture was really less than a decade long."

From 1953 to 1958 the mob seemed to have it pretty good in Havana. "They had a legal gambling empire," Deitche explains. "But the advantage of Havana was that they were out of the US and working with a friendly, and very corrupt, government under Batista." The political corruption that helped make the mob's business practices in Cuba possible also carried an air of unpredictability. Even the best odds analysers in the underworld could not be sure their exotic empire would exist in perpetuity. Batista had devolved into full-scale dictator in just a few short years following the coup d'etat; he and the mob profited greatly while the country's economic gap between wealth and poverty widened. As such, Fidel Castro's revolution may or may not have been taken seriously by gangland investors, but a disenfranchised population was rapidly buying into the rebel rhetoric.

The extent of mob influence on Cuban policy has, however, also come into question as recently as 2020 with the writings of Frank Argote-Freyre. In his book *Cuban Studies*, the subsection 'The Myth of Mafia Rule in 1950s Cuba' acknowledges the presence, saying, "US mobsters did frequent Havana during this period," but states the research never demonstrates the mob had any overreaching power within the Batista regime. "The notion that several gangsters from the United States dominated the island in the prerevolutionary era is a classic case of historiographical imperialism," he writes, adding, "It is a mythology based on exaggerated autobiographical mobster accounts and the scholarship on tourism that has accepted the mobster accounts as factual." The assertion of overhyped history is valid. However, the references cited specifically regarding Lansky and Luciano's relationship (or lack thereof) with political figures relies heavily on CIA and FBI reports, with no mention of the FBN's files. This is problematic because the FBN, notwithstanding its own tunnel vision and agenda, arguably produced the most relevant and real-time documentation of the mob's activities in Havana. The FBI, at that time, had a very different focus of interest in Cuba. Moreover, when the FBI did mention the mob's alleged political allies in Cuba, it was highly redacted and largely relied on cited and paraphrased information plucked from original FBN sources.

"THE EXTENT OF MOB INFLUENCE ON CUBAN POLICY HAS, HOWEVER, ALSO COME INTO QUESTION"

All arguments aside, an undeniable fact was about to crash everyone's party. The Revolution had reached Havana's proverbial doorstep. In late December 1958, 300km away from Havana, a rebel column led by Ernesto 'Che' Guevara defeated the army (that outnumbered the rebels nearly 10 to 1) in Santa Clara. Batista resigned to an inevitable fate upon hearing the news - Havana was next to fall. On 31 December, Batista fled the island with an entourage of family, friends and millions of dollars. With no commander in chief, the military collapsed. Fidel Castro entered Havana with ease on 8 January 1959. Some accounts of what happened to the casinos in the immediate thereafter are conflicting. In the celebration (or melee) that ensued in Havana, some rebels took up quarters in the hotels, some of the hotels were indeed vandalised, but all tourist-related activities were certainly interrupted. Castro did in fact close down the hotels, briefly, but many of the Cubans who formerly worked in the establishments were suddenly unemployed and the stress of rapidly declining tourism revenue gave Castro a change of heart. The casinos were reopened in February - with stipulations, e.g. Cubans couldn't be clientele unless able to prove sufficient wealth, but even that edict lapsed. According to the 2 March 1959 *TIME Magazine* report, the mob was back in business at the Comodoro and Sans Souci, and "None of the mob makes a move without consulting Miami's Meyer Lansky."

It was rumoured Meyer Lansky exited the island days before the rebels arrived, as did many American tourists and business executives. "Santo Trafficante Jr. stayed to see how things would play out," says Scott Deitche. "Trafficante was jailed for a time by Castro, though even after he was released in August of 1959, he stayed in Cuba until Nov 1959." By 1960 the State had taken much of the private sector's holdings, including the casinos, effectively ending the mob's Cuban paradise. Castro proudly touted his ousting of outlaws in a speech on 31 August 1960:

"When our revolution came to power, these gangsters ran abroad and they started operating against us in several countries. Now again they think that they are safe; they have forgotten what happened to them in Cuba; they still think that the power of the empire will never end."

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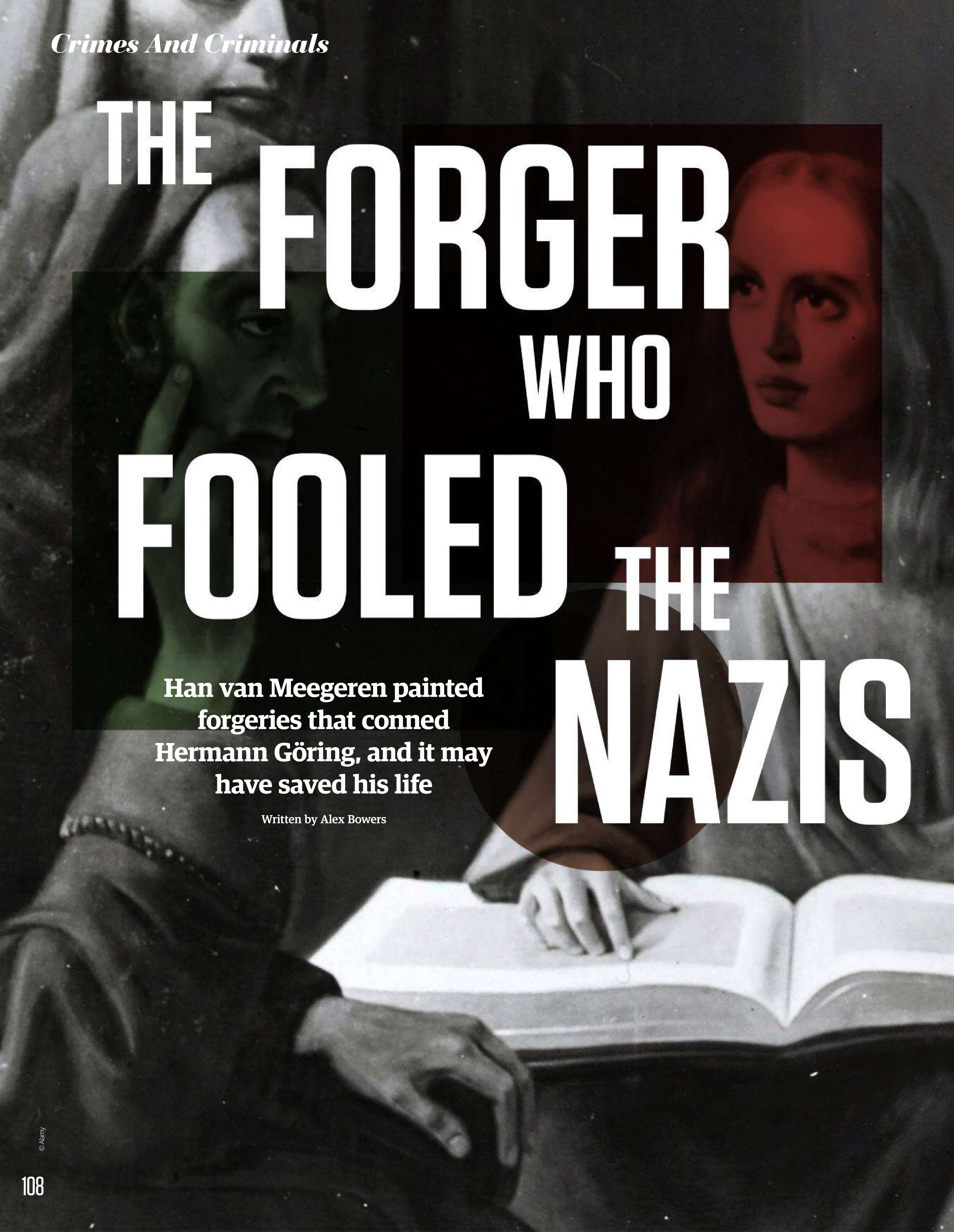


THE FORGER WHO FOOLED THE NAZIS

Han van Meegeren painted forgeries that conned Hermann Göring, and it may have saved his life

Written by Alex Bowers

© Alamy

In the ruins of Berlin in 1945, a book with a curious inscription was discovered in the personal library of Adolf Hitler. The deluxe volume of poems, co-authored by a Nazi Dutch writer, contained illustrations from artist and fellow countryman Han van Meegeren. Within its pages, van Meegeren had seemingly penned a glowing dedication to his "beloved Führer|", which posed a considerable threat to the painter who had by then been arrested as a potential Nazi collaborator, with a possible jail sentence looming over him.

But it was to be his association with another Nazi leader – notorious art plunderer Hermann Göring – that would garner the vast majority of the public's attention. A few years earlier, the German Reichsmarschall had purchased a painting he believed to be the creation of renowned 17th-century artist Johannes Vermeer. Except he hadn't. What Göring had bought was an 'authentic' van Meegeren forgery, a wickedly gratifying con that elevated its maker's status from traitor to cunning anti-hero in an instant. It also, perhaps most significantly, left the art world reeling from the harsh reality of fakes.

> "SUCH HAD BEEN HIS FERVENT DESIRE TO REPLICATE THE OLD MASTERS THAT HE WAS TO BE CHARGED WITH SELLING OFF THEIR GENUINE PAINTINGS"

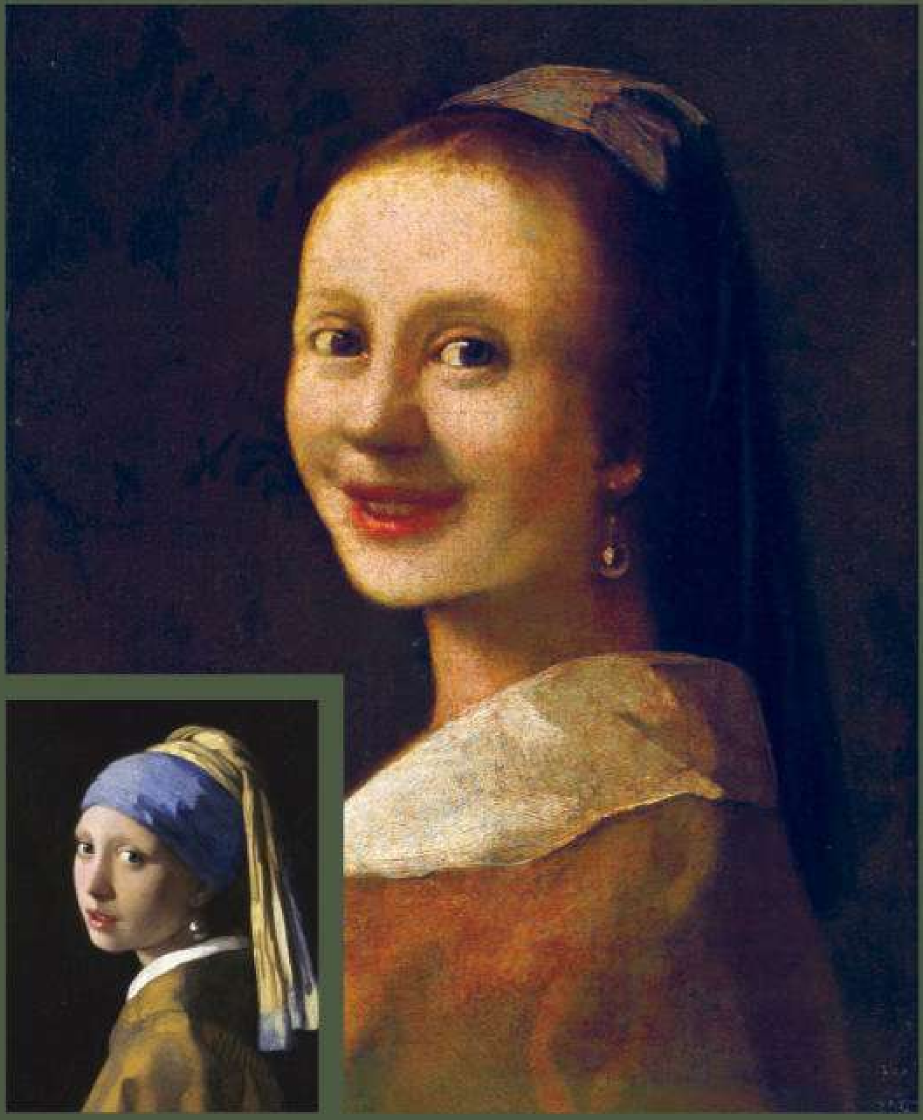
THE MAKING OF A MASTER FORGER

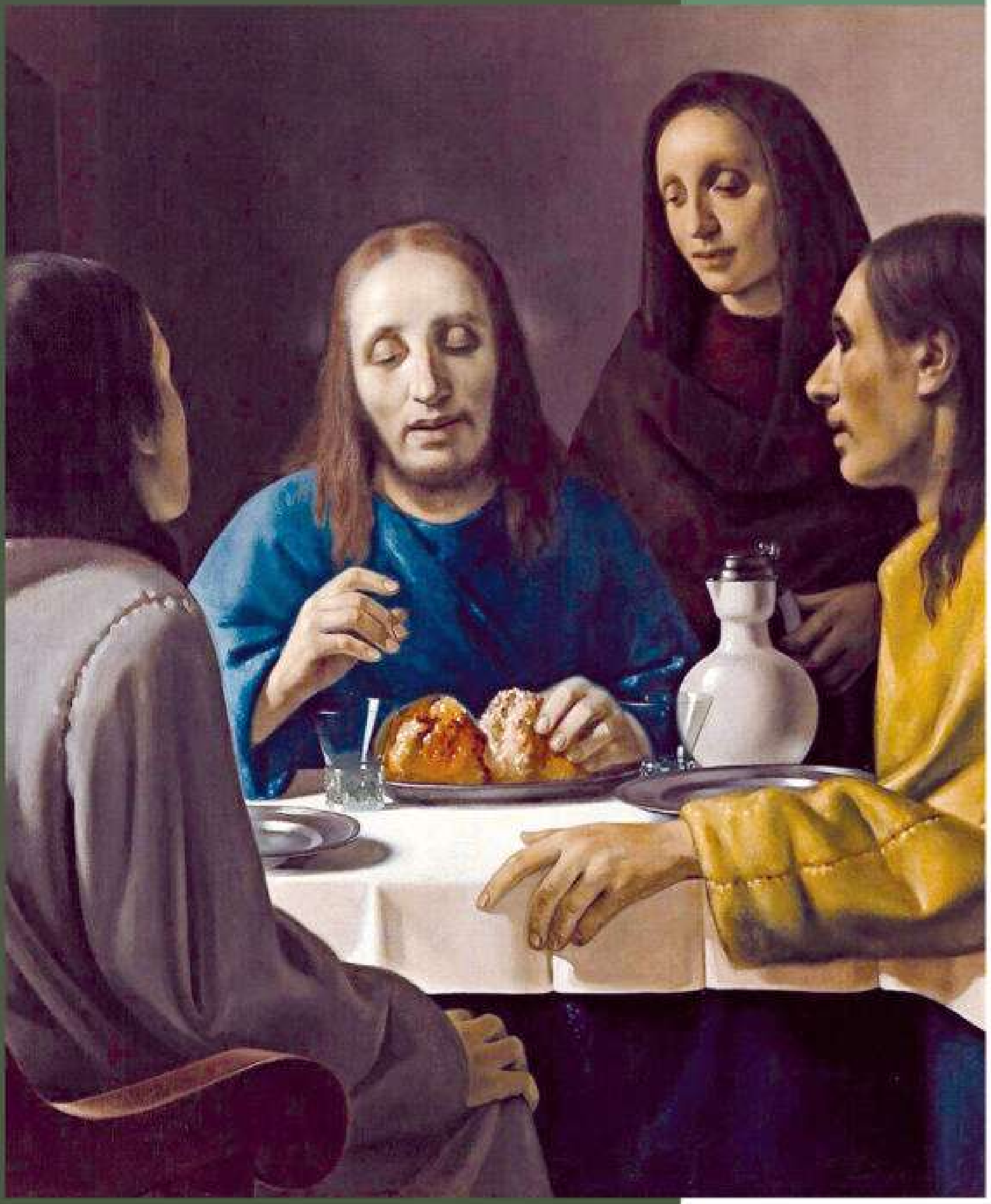
Born in 1889 to a Catholic family in the Netherlands, Henricus van Meegeren – nicknamed Han – was never destined to become an artist in his parents' eyes. The boy's passion for Dutch Golden Age art was dismissed by his father, who sent him to study architecture in Delft – the hometown of Vermeer. There, his admiration for the Old Masters only grew, and he decided against taking his final architect examination and instead pursued a career in drawing and painting. Around this time, he married art student Anna de Voogt and the couple had their first of two children together. His household then moved to The Hague for van Meegeren to study for a degree at the local art academy.

The painter's first public exhibition of legitimate work was heralded a success in 1917. Unfortunately, the Biblical themes of his second exhibition – while commercially successful and largely praised – failed to endear every critic. Reported infidelities, especially on various European tours, likewise prompted the breakdown of his marriage as his insatiable lust for the high life reached new levels. Divorcing Anna in 1923, van Meegeren turned to alcohol and other vices to ease his disillusionment with a fickle art scene. Despite having carved out a modest existence with his sketches, drawings and paintings, his bitterness towards his detractors, spurred on by his craving for fame and fortune, led him down a dark path.

TAKING ARTISTIC LICENCE

In 1928, van Meegeren's resentment found a new outlet when he started publishing a reactionary arts magazine called *De Kemphaan* (*The Fighting Cock*). The platform enabled him to spout extremist rhetoric, denouncing modern painting as "art-Bolshevism" whose proponents were nothing more than a "slimy bunch of woman-haters and negro-lovers", at one stage invoking the image of "a Jew with a handcart" to symbolise the international art market. But his desire for revenge took him further. Having married his second wife, Johanna de Boer, he moved to the south of France hoping to reclaim his prestige through questionable means. He planned on creating a series of forgeries that would resemble the Old Masters in every conceivable way to secure his place alongside them.





TOP After his arrest in 1945, van Meegeren painted *Christ in the Temple* to showcase his forgery skills for his imminent court appearance

LEFT An imitation of Vermeer's style with *Smiling Girl*, that seems to draw from the look and pose of the celebrated *Girl with a Pearl Earring*

ABOVE *The Supper of Emmaus* was one of van Meegeren's most famous works, later fooling art critic Dr Abraham Bredius into believing it was an authentic Vermeer

Van Meegeren already had some experience making counterfeits, albeit on a much smaller scale. It took a few more years to perfect his technique, a drawn-out affair that required ingenious improvisation. Beginning with the canvas, he purchased works of what he considered to be mediocre 17th-century artists over which he could paint. Meanwhile, the pigments and tools he utilised were only those that had been readily available in the period of Vermeer and his esteemed contemporaries. His greatest challenge was replicating age, although even this he achieved with the application of Bakelite, a component almost impossible to analyse with the methods at hand during that period. Once setting the modern synthetic resin onto the canvas, van Meegeren baked the painting to harden the material. The result was a piece of artwork that could pass as being 300 years old. Finally, for the sake of perceived authenticity, he added blemishes that alluded to the ravages of time. All that was left was to see whether his harshest critics would be fooled by his fraud.

'EVERY INCH A VERMEER'

Van Meegeren built up a collection of fakes in the French Riviera, not only in the style of Vermeer but also other Dutch Golden Age painters. His two imitations of artist Pieter de Hooch – *Interior with Drinkers* and *The Cardplayers* – were great examples of his versatile skills. Nevertheless, returning from the Berlin Olympics in 1936, he created *The Supper at Emmaus*, soon to become one of his most famous fabrications of Vermeer. By September 1937, the forgery had caught the attention of Rembrandt expert Dr Abraham Bredius, who, writing in the British art publication *The Burlington Magazine*, declared: "It is a wonderful moment in the life of a lover of art when he finds himself suddenly confronted with a hitherto unknown painting by a great master, untouched, on the original canvas, and without any restoration, just as it left the painter's studio. And what a picture!… we have here – I am inclined to say – the masterpiece of Johannes Vermeer of Delft… quite different from all his other paintings and yet every inch a Vermeer. In no other picture by the great master of Delft do we find such sentiment, such a profound understanding of the Bible story – a sentiment so nobly human expressed through the medium of highest art." Van Meegeren had succeeded in convincing one of his most despised disparagers that *The Supper at Emmaus* was a 17th-century work of art from one of the most highly revered Dutch painters.

'JO DIDN'T KNOW'

Was van Meegeren's ex-wife Johanna an innocent bystander or complicit in his crimes?

Johanna's involvement in her husband's forgery empire has been speculated upon ever since van Meegeren's deception was uncovered. A professional actress, she had been married before to art critic Carel de Boer, whom she divorced in 1927. Johanna and van Meegeren had long been entangled in a love affair, and in 1928 they married. Whether their relationship extended to partners in crime is a matter reserved for conjecture, however probable it appears. Van Meegeren was consistent in telling interested parties that "Jo didn't know", despite several factors pointing in the opposite direction. Namely, their seemingly strategic divorce in December 1943 – while they stayed together – enabled the artist to transfer funds into her accounts, thereby protecting the money from unexpected circumstances. Even prior to that stage, when van Meegeren was creating forgeries in the 1930s, his mysterious wealth would have undoubtedly raised the eyebrows of any wife. Had authorities been given cause to believe that Johanna was an accomplice, her capital would have been confiscated like that of van Meegeren himself. Therefore it was in the couple's interest to forge a story that implied a level of ignorance on Johanna's part; that way, once van Meegeren had served out his sentence, they could still live a life of decadence. The painter's death in 1947 would have put an end to that potential dream, but Johanna was nevertheless able to hold onto her funds, which she used until her own death at 91.

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> “THE PAINTER’S HUMILIATION OF GÖRING SPARKED WIDESPREAD JOY, IN PART PROMPTED BY VAN MEEGEREN’S DEFT STORY-SPINNING AT HIS TRIAL”

Had he been inclined to contemplate revealing his scheme to prove his critics wrong and showcase his genius, it was now almost certainly too late. Upon discovering that his painting would make him what would today be several million dollars, there was no longer any justifiable reason in his mind to tell the world of his ruse. Van Meegeren maintained his silence, took the vast sum of money, and purchased a lavishly decorated 12-bedroom estate in Nice. From his new home, he continued to experiment with his forgeries. But with the ominous clouds of war gathering above Europe in 1939, he decided to move back to the Netherlands, still intent on bolstering his funds to feed his opulent lifestyle.

A BRUSH WITH GÖRING

The Nazi occupation of Holland changed the way van Meegeren operated. Since most museums had placed their masterpieces in storage to protect against war damage, there were fewer Vermeer paintings to compare against his work. Their absence allowed for a degree of negligence in the criminal artist’s counterfeits, which suffered from poor quality and the use of innovations not seen until the 19th century, some 200 years after the Old Masters. Van Meegeren’s chain-smoking and alcohol consumption increased. In 1943, he divorced his second wife, albeit as a formality as the couple remained together, but with a sizable share of van Meegeren’s capital being transferred into her accounts, presumably to safeguard from the uncertainties of the conflict. Settling in Amsterdam that same year, van Meegeren’s newest forgeries boosted his ever-profitable enterprise. Among them were *Isaac Blessing Jacob* and *The Footwashing* – both Biblical pictures somewhat reminiscent of Vermeer. One would have more impact than the rest: the Vermeer-esque *Christ and the Adulteress*.

Nazi banker and art dealer Alois Miedl had by then acquired *Christ and the Adulteress* when Göring decided to purchase it. The consequential transaction – amounting to a 1.65 million guilder price tag that might have included a trade of looted paintings for the fake – was to have a significant influence on van Meegeren. Like the Nazis themselves, his luck was about to take a turn for the worse. Göring hid his prized possession in an underground cavern alongside innumerable other stolen relics, but the horde was discovered by US Captain Harry Anderson of the so-called Monuments Men in May 1945. It wasn’t long until the subsequent Allied investigation landed squarely at the feet of van Meegeren. Arrested on 29 May, the millionaire was accused not of forgery but of stealing Dutch cultural property and collaboration with the Nazis. Such had been his fervent desire to replicate the Old Masters that he was to be charged with selling off their genuine paintings.

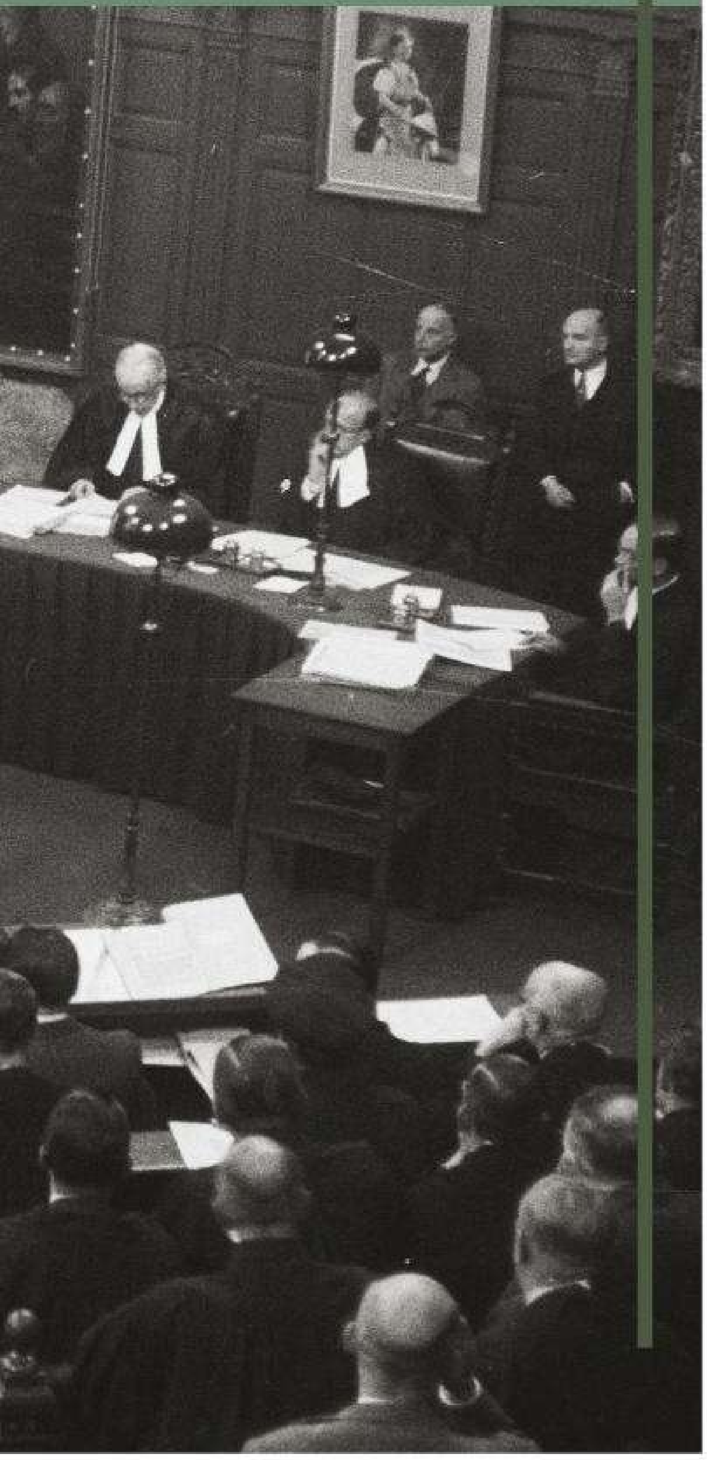
THE TRIAL OF VAN MEEGEREN

Van Meegeren faced the prospect of prison if proven to have robbed the Netherlands of its precious artwork for the gains of Third Reich officials. He laboured over how best to defend his actions, and after two weeks he came up with a solution. The painter admitted to some – but not all – of his forgeries before leaning into the oft-publicised tale that his trickery had been a stunt to teach the Nazis a lesson. He should not be treated as a sympathiser, van Meegeren implied to authorities, but as a national hero. Though it’s unknown whether Göring ever learned of the deception as he stood trial in Nuremberg for his own crimes, it wasn’t he who needed to be convinced. Van Meegeren illustrated his capabilities by creating his final fake Vermeer beginning in July 1945 in front of reporters and court-appointed witnesses. *Christ in the Temple*, once the last brush stroke had swept across the canvas, would be enough to have the most serious charges dropped. Yet it wouldn’t be enough to absolve him of his confessed forgeries, which could still carry with them a prison sentence of two years.

On 29 October 1947, the trial of van Meegeren went ahead. A commission of international art experts examined the paintings identified as fake, now armed with the knowledge required to determine the chemical compositions of the paints applied to them. Incriminating items were uncovered in the artist’s studios, including

ABOVE The 1947 trial of van Meegeren – who is seen here watching the proceedings from the dock – captivated the post-war world

BELOW Göring was a notorious art plunderer. The fact that he had been fooled into buying the forged *Christ and the Adulteress* was a source of great humour for the public



Bakelite, lending credence to claims of artistic fabrication. Further demonstrations and analysis drew similar conclusions. Ultimately, on 12 November 1947, van Meegeren was found guilty of fraud and forgery, leading to a one-year prison sentence and the forfeiture of his wealth – excluding the funds held by his ex-wife Johanna through their convenient divorce. Probably expecting to see out his sentence before rekindling his relationship, van Meegeren's supposed aspirations were cut short by his declining health. In a sudden turn of events, on 30 December he suffered heart failure and was pronounced dead aged 58.

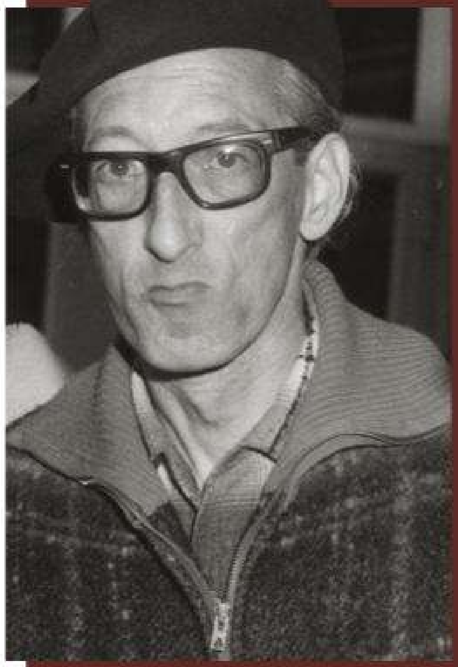
THE FRAUD AND THE STORY-TELLER:

Having escaped death at the hands of a court only to succumb to the apparent after-effects of his addictions and lifestyle, the late van Meegeren's property was auctioned off to the highest bidder. His sudden passing left the Dutch public with more questions than answers, the most pressing of which was how his chequered legacy should be remembered. The painter's humiliation of the pompous Göring had sparked widespread joy, in part prompted by van Meegeren's deft story-spinning throughout his trial. Equally, his alleged tribute to Hitler in the unearthed poetry book threatened to unravel his slick persona in spite of the accused's adamant denials that he was the author of those troubling words. Even today, perceptions surrounding the exploits of van Meegeren remain in the eyes of the beholder – much like his forgeries.

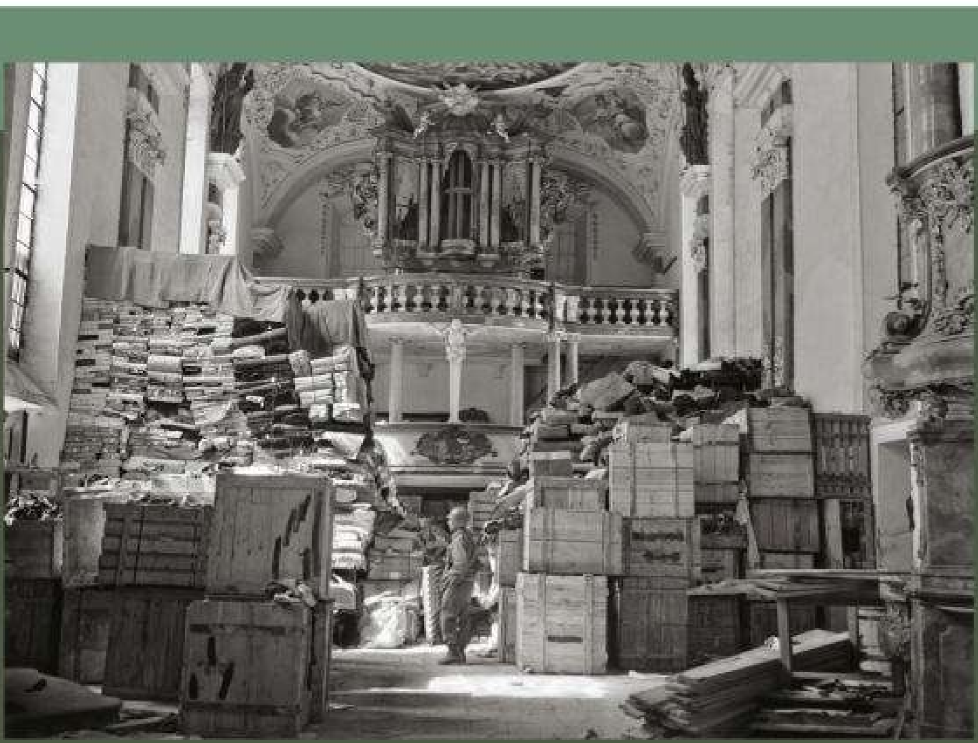
But the multi-million-dollar question was to be asked by the art world van Meegeren had so successfully duped: how many of his paintings were still hanging in museums and galleries under false pretences? There is a slight possibility that even now acclaimed 17th-century masterpieces are, in reality, 20th-century imitations conjured by a man whose swindling made him a fortune. Estimates vary on how much he conned out of his victims, but some figures put it in the range of hundreds of millions of dollars by today's standards. The forgeries themselves – at last attributed to their real creator – have since been displayed in institutes around the globe, often a short distance from the Old Masters van Meegeren aspired to be.

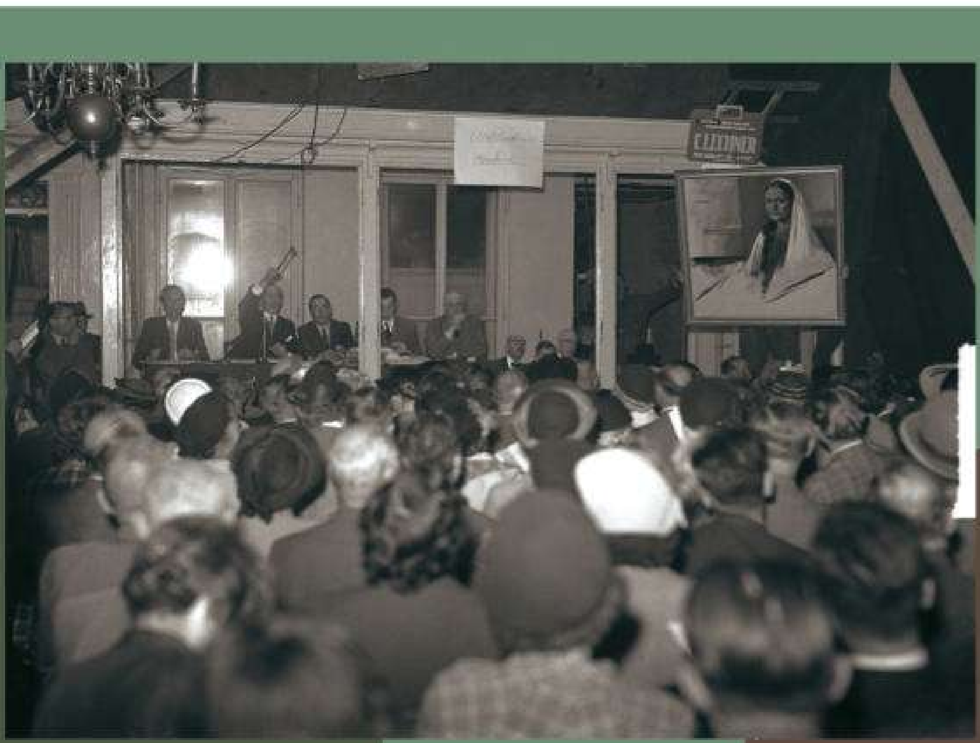
LIKE FATHER LIKE SON

The stranger-than-fiction story of how Jacques van Meegeren followed a similar path to his father, but with less success



For most forgers, the art of becoming a fraud is a skill learnt with time, trial and error. For Han van Meegeren's son Jacques, it appeared that genes had at least a minor part to play as well. Born in 1912 to his father's first wife, Jacques was reported to be a sickly child who shared a distant relationship with the painter. The boy nevertheless loved being allowed into van Meegeren's studio, where he was occasionally permitted to help tidy or clean brushes. In later years, he accompanied his father on trips to art dealers or museums, offering him an insight into the inner workings of the world van Meegeren inhabited. Jacques learned how to sketch and draw, although he still had to endure periods of paternal neglect. But there is no denying that his father would have a dramatic influence on him upon reaching adulthood. Han van Meegeren had already filed for bankruptcy when he died – this left Jacques without a substantial inheritance, which he partly offset by painting commissioned portraits. At that stage, however, his late father's forgeries, since revealed for what they were, had become popular unto themselves. Jacques eventually began forging Han van Meegeren's signature on his own works, enabling them to sell for much higher prices. His Biblical depictions bore a vague resemblance to the elder van Meegeren in most instances, yet he struggled to replicate the quality of his father's earlier paintings and so his funds dwindled. Having become bitter and by then drinking heavily, Jacques died in 1977. The parallels between the two forgers' lives a generation apart are both intriguing and tragic.





MIDDLE An American soldier examines stacks of Jewish-owned art looted by the Nazis and found hidden in a German church

LEFT Having filed for bankruptcy in 1945, van Meegeren's property was auctioned off in the autumn of 1950

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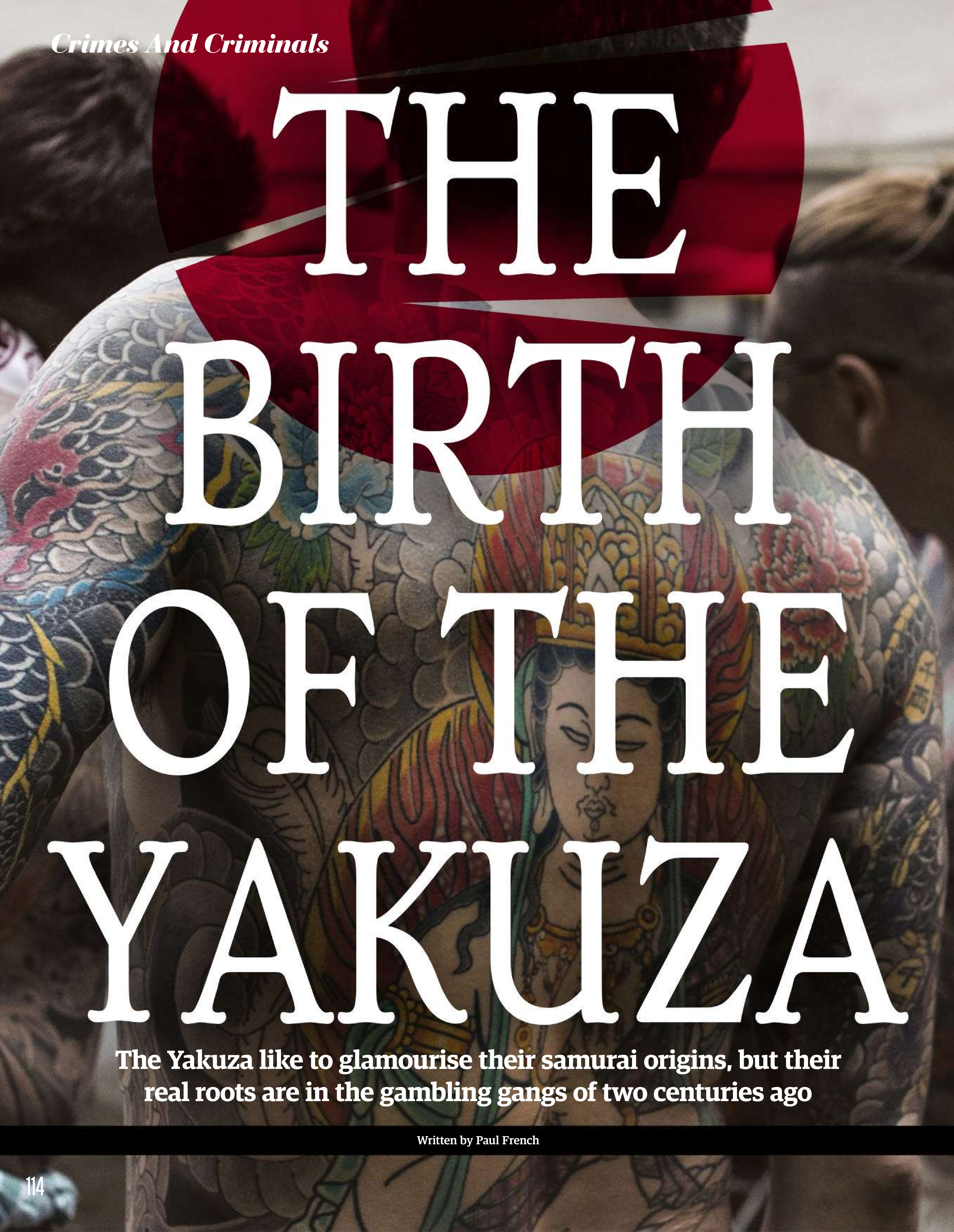


THE BIRTH OF THE YAKUZA

The Yakuza like to glamourise their samurai origins, but their real roots are in the gambling gangs of two centuries ago

Written by Paul French

The Yazuka are a contradiction. Unlike the most notorious organised crime syndicates globally – the Italian Mafia, the Russian Vory, the South American cartels – they are rarely seen being violent in public. Few drive-by assassinations, warning killings, or even street brawls. They are at once a shadowy institution while simultaneously their offices are easy to find in any Japanese city. Extortion, smuggling, drugs, loansharking, prostitution… the Yakuza are involved in them all and more, yet they maintain a front of legitimate businesses. They are one of Japan's largest charitable organisations, universally praised for their rapid response when disasters, earthquakes, tsunamis strike, including the Fukushima nuclear disaster of 2011. Their smart suits, finger severing, and especially the elaborate tattooing have become culturally iconic.

Japanese TV is flooded with, often sympathetic, Yakuza series and movies. Newsstands and convenience store magazine racks feature Yakuza fan magazines while bookstores prominently display Yakuza adventure novels. To many the Yakuza, while clearly criminal, symbolise the traditional virtues of family, discipline, trust, and honour. Like European knights or Wild West cowboys, they are problematic yet admired by many and cemented into the culture. So, to understand how this particular Japanese phenomenon has arisen, we will need to go back to the Yakuza's origins – a contested arena.

> “THE YAKUZA HAVE VERY SUCCESSFULLY BUILT UP A MYTHOLOGY AROUND THEIR ORIGINS”

Most long-standing organised crime groups have a self-glorifying and self-justifying narrative. Whatever the culture it's invariably something of a mix between a Robin Hood-style defence of the poor against the rich, mixed with the need to protect a certain weak community against a rapacious tyrant, warlord or landowner. The truth of course is invariably distinctly less noble and honourable. The Yakuza's true origins are murky at best. While they may like to emphasise their roots in samurai culture, in fact the Yakuza emerged from an underworld of illegal gamblers, extortionists and street peddlars in the 1800s. Regular bad guys. ▶

All images © Getty Images

But the Yakuza have never seen themselves as simply street thugs. They have, perhaps more than any other global organised criminal enterprise, sought to present themselves as community organisations, defenders of the ordinary people (though invariably on the side of employers rather than labour unions, whose strikes they are happy to break), their offices signposted, their presence relatively out in the open. They work hard, through their fan media and high-level political contacts, to appear part of the intrinsic fabric of Japanese society, almost a parallel power structure to locally democratic representatives or the police.

FOUNDATION MYTH

The Yakuza have very successfully built up a mythology around their origins. The narrative goes that today's Yakuza 'families' are descended from the samurai, members of Japan's warrior caste that appeared around the late 12th century and reached their prominence between the 17th century to the late 19th (the Mid-Edo period in Japan). The samurai eventually severely declined with the beginning of the Meiji era (1868-1912), as Japan emerged from feudalism to industrial power as a modern nation state. As the country coalesced and became connected, forming nationwide institutions and laws, building an imperial army and effective tax system, the role of the samurai as warrior for local clan chiefs and warlords disappeared. The rapid social changes and new technological advances, the onset of urbanisation, all left the samurai redundant, their status stripped, their privileges to carry arms outlawed. And, so the legend goes, they morphed into new associations, created new affiliations, and clustered in self-supporting 'families', calling themselves Yakuza.

> "WHILE THE SAMURAI ORIGIN MYTH MAY SURVIVE IN POPULAR CULTURE, THE REALITY OF THE YAKUZA'S ORIGINS IS FAR MORE PROSAIC"

At their height (and by 1870 an estimated five per cent of Japan's population were members of samurai families) the samurai were the highly paid retainers of the *daimyo*, the feudal landholders who controlled great swathes of towns and countryside. They were instantly recognisable by their distinctive armour that was constructed of leather and/or iron scales, as well as their deadly swords (*katana*) of which they always carried two, characterised by a curved, single-edged blade with a circular or squared guard and long grip to accommodate two hands. Later the *katana* would be used alongside matchlock rifles, introduced in the 16th century after the long closed and isolated island country began trading with visiting European ships and acquired modern European weapons technology.

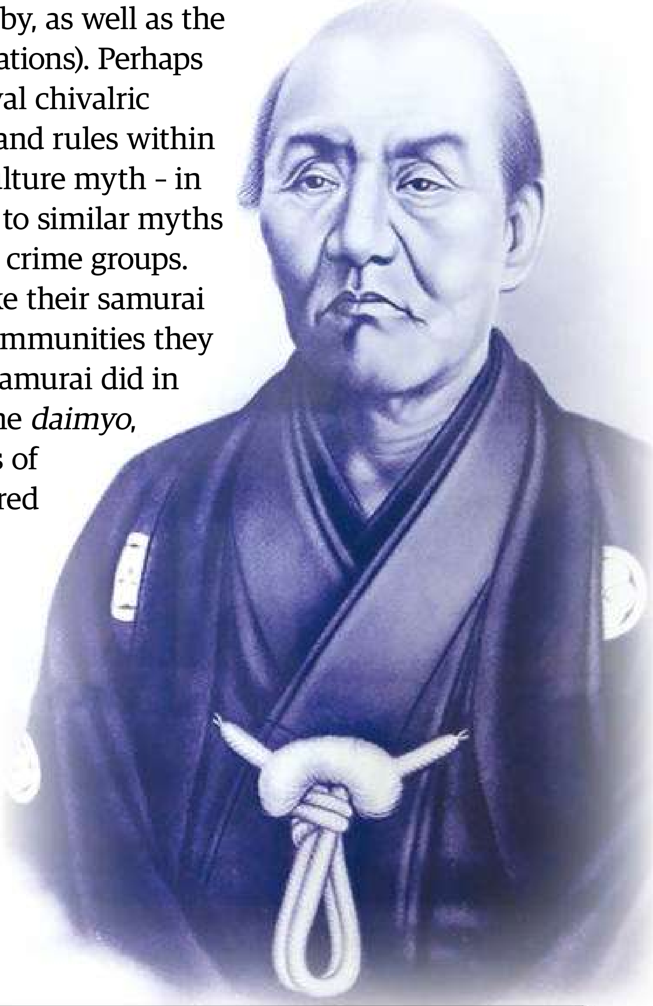
To ensure their loyalty (and loyalties could be fickle; allegiances were formed and broken quickly with deadly consequences for a stingy or weak-looking *daimyo*) the samurai had been awarded high prestige and special privileges, such as additional supplies of rice in times of shortage, peasant servants, and even the right to execute common people who disrespected them!

Contemporary Yakuza legend claims that they inherited the *bushido* traditions from the samurai; codes of martial virtues and moral rules that all were expected to live by, as well as the concept of *ninkyo dantai* (honourable organisations). Perhaps the closest European equivalent is the Medieval chivalric code. This notion of *bushido* and strict codes and rules within the Yakuza has become part of the popular culture myth – in countless movies, TV series and novels – akin to similar myths around the Sicilian Mafia and other organised crime groups.

The modern-day Yakuza may argue that, like their samurai forebears, they work for the interests of the communities they operate in, but of course this is not what the samurai did in the Edo period. Rather they served masters, the *daimyo*, landowners not best disposed to the demands of the peasantry. The *daimyo* themselves answered to the shogunate (military commanders) and ultimately to the emperor. The samurai were mercenaries, their allegiances fluctuated with the fortunes of their temporary masters, and they were, by turn, hated, feared and disdained among the village peasantry they so regularly trampled over.

After the 1870s as the Mid-Edo period became the Meiji and ideas of how society should be organised changed radically, the samurai clans fell apart. The Meiji

RIGHT Edo-period *bakuto* gather to play dice and gamble – the forerunner of today's Yakuza gangs



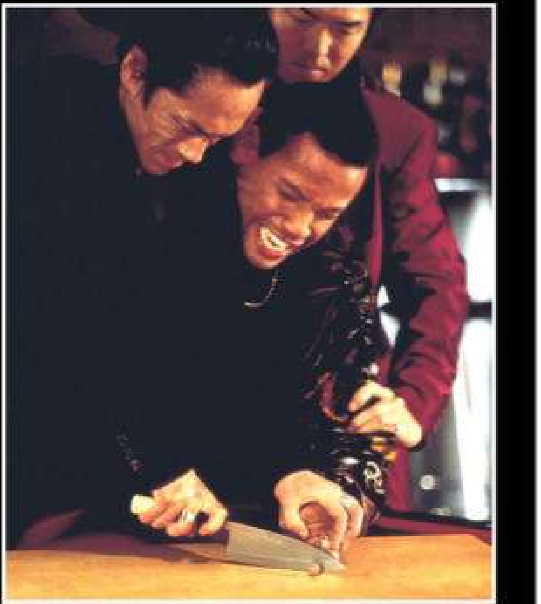
BELOW Shimizu Jirocho (1820-1893) rose from being a penniless *bakuto* to control Edo-period Japan's most prosperous region

RITUAL ATONEMENT

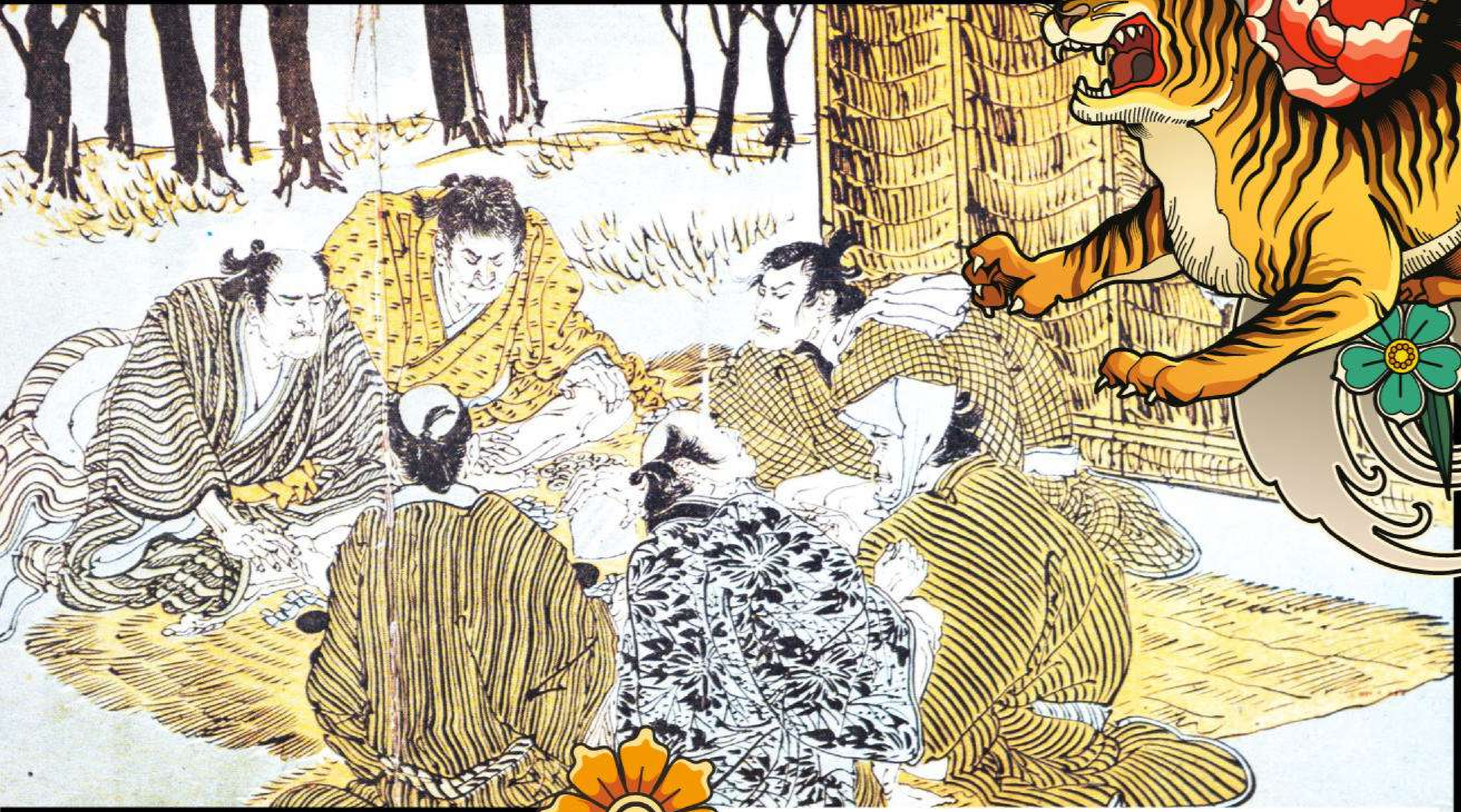
Finger severing (*yubitsume*) and suicide by disembowelling (*seppuku*) are core to the Yakuza's legend

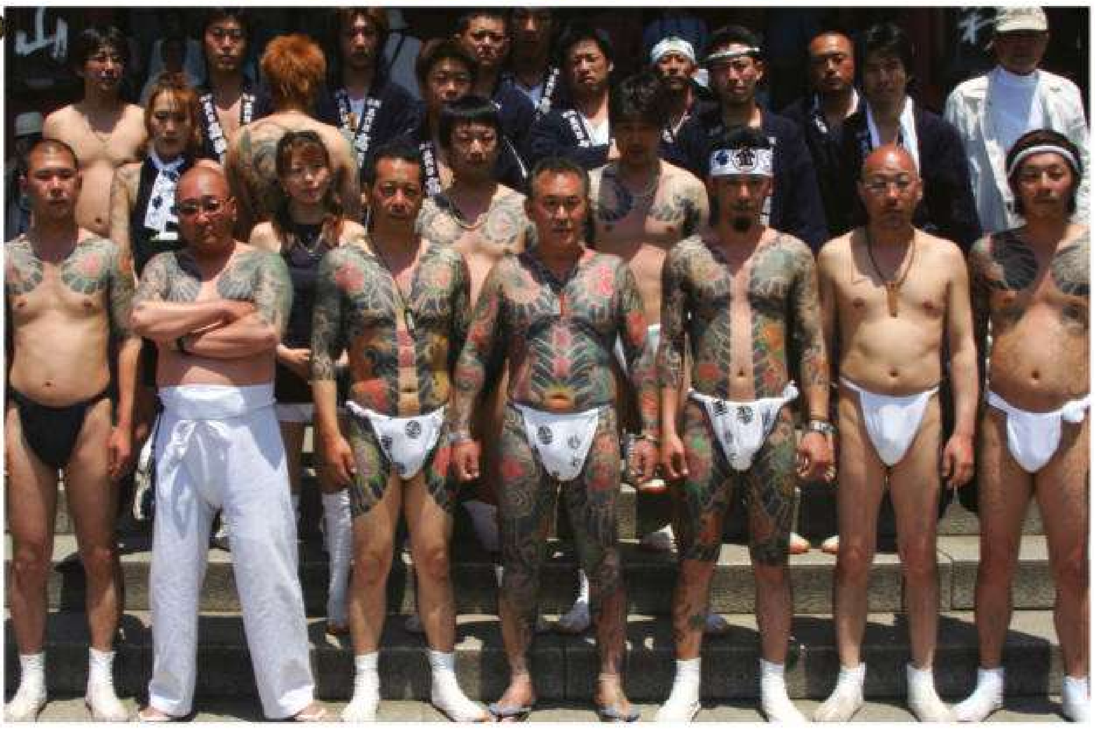
Dramatic gestures are a part of Yakuza life. *Yubitsume* or the cutting off of one's finger, is a form of penance or apology. For a first offence, the tip of the left little finger is cut off and the severed portion given to the *oyabun*. Further offences may result in more fingers being cut off. Historically this would gradually weaken the offender's sword grip, forcing them to rely on their comrade more and learn from that. Today the practice is unpopular as it clearly identifies Yakuza members to the police, though prosthetic fingers are often used to avoid detection.

Seppuku is a traditionally samurai practice that still occurs occasionally – though far more in Yakuza movies than real life. Literally 'stomach cutting' it is a ritual form of suicide by disembowelment that is not exclusive to the Yakuza and has been performed by disgraced officials, politicians, and even shamed celebrities. It is traditionally performed with a short sword, slicing open the stomach and then turning the blade upwards to ensure a fatal wound.



ABOVE The famously brutal ritualistic punishments are often depicted in Yakuza films, like 2000's *Brother*





ABOVE-LEFT The Yakuza's *tekiya* roots remain – here Yakuza members gather at the Sanja Matsuri festival, a temple fair long controlled by *tekiya*/Yakuza gangs

ABOVE-RIGHT During the festival, Yakuza members proudly display their full-body tattoos

government was determined to abolish them and integrate the samurai class into the wider society. The open wearing of the *katana* was abolished, as was the ancient right of being permitted to execute disrespectful commoners. In the main, the samurai families accepted the changes. They entered mainstream Japanese society – became educated, entered business and, so the myth says, formed Yakuza families. And within their new criminal world, so the legend goes, they retained the concepts of *bushido*. In practice this loyalty has tended to be a general support for the status-quo, the political right wing in Japan (employers favoured over striking workers, breaking up left-wing political demonstrations), and showing fealty to the emperor. In World War II the militarist government played on ideas of samurai culture to recruit 'modern day samurai' to the armed forces, reiterating the moral ideals of *bushido* in order to foster and maintain military discipline and loyalty.

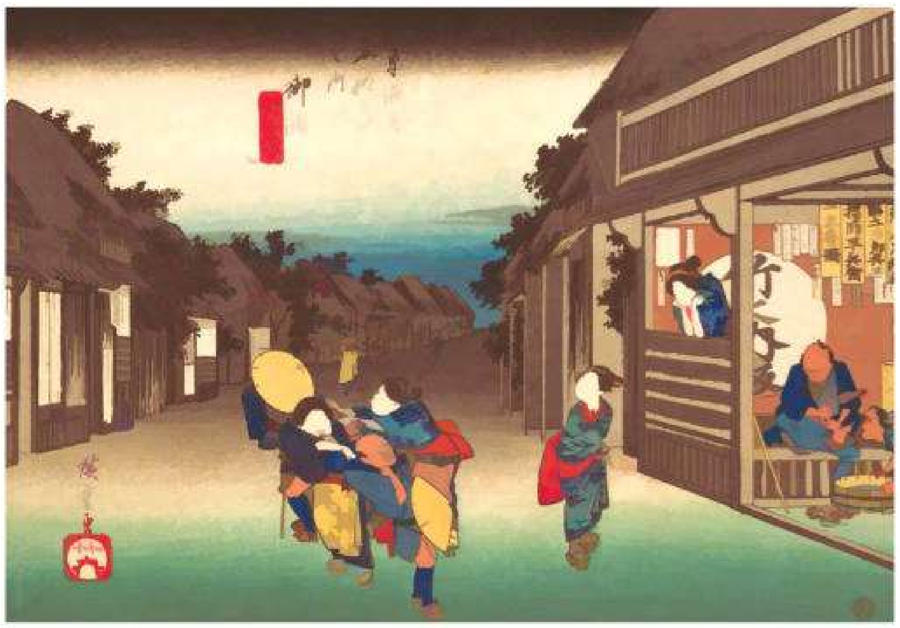
But effectively by the 1940s, and after the war and Japan's defeat, the samurai class had become purely mythic, in a similar vein to the cowboys of the old Wild West – partially revered, but receding into history. And while the samurai origin myth may survive in popular culture, the reality of the Yakuza's origins is far more prosaic.

PEDDLERS AND GAMBLERS

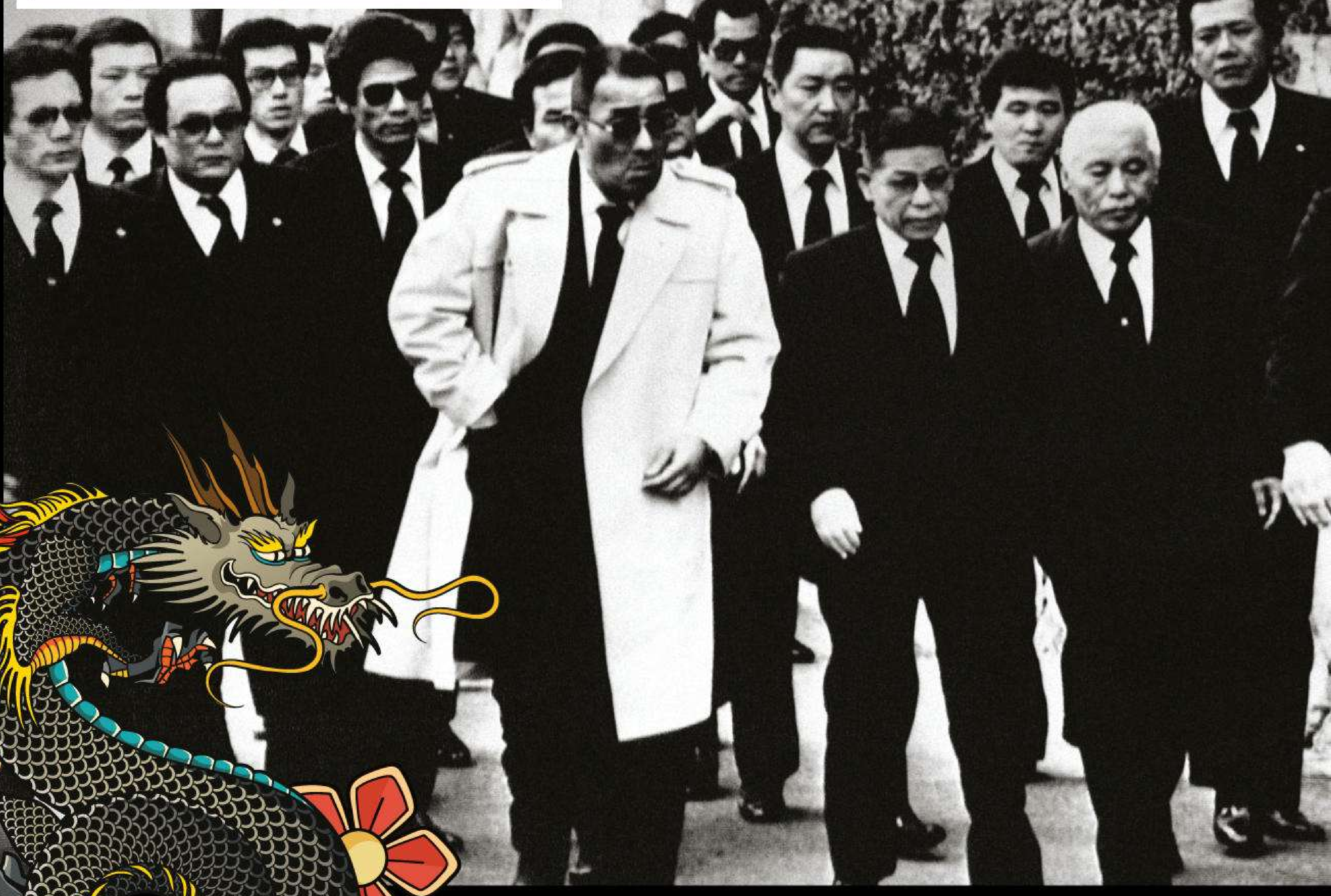
The Yakuza as latter-day samurai has certainly fed the cultural imagination of Japan and the rest of the world with highly exoticised portrayals of groups of tattoo-clad, honour-obsessed gangsters dressed either in floor-length *yukata* robes or

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

LEFT Yakuza movies and TV series remain phenomenally popular. Here legendary actor and regular Yakuza anti-hero Takeshi Kitano stars in one of his unsentimental gangster films, *Outrage*, 2010



BELOW-LEFT Utagawa Hiroshige's 1830s woodblock print of prostitutes trying to lure travellers into a *bakuto* inn

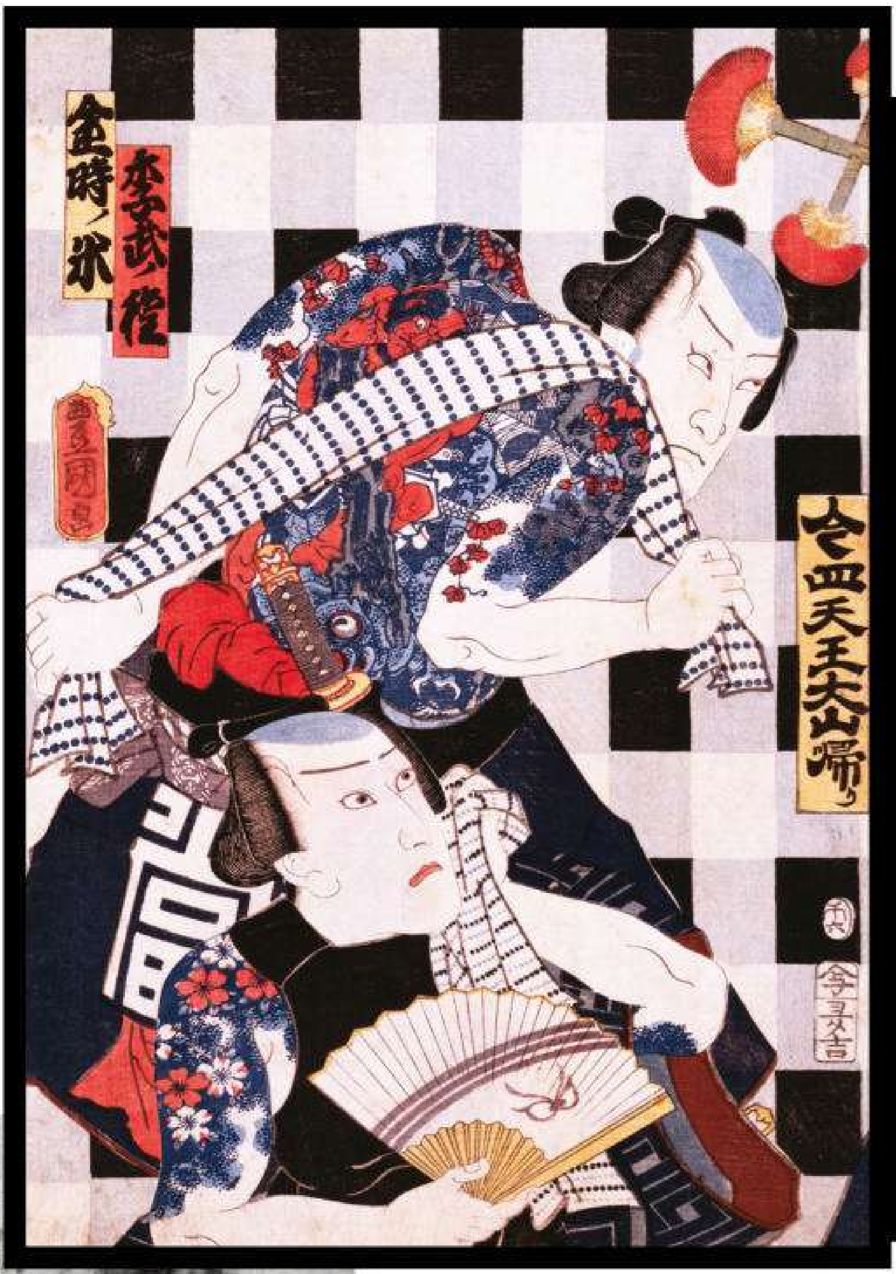


BELOW The Yakuza's heyday was arguably the rich 'Bubble Years' of Japan's economy - by the early 1990s the bubble had burst, economic stagnation hit and the government began to crack down hard on the families

black 'sharp suits', gangsters mostly involved in internal power-plays rather than terrorising local communities. In reality, the Yakuza has evolved in the 21st century into a much less co-ordinated, far from uniform organisation. However, ideas common the world over - territory, hierarchy, violent behaviour, extortion, vice, preying on the weak and defenceless - all apply to the Yakuza. They still refer to themselves as *ninkyo dantai* (chivalric organisation) but the police more realistically call them *boryokudan* (violent gangs). Undeniably they have been, until recent strict crackdowns, extremely successful financially though now their numbers are significantly diminished, recruitment is tough, and more than half of the identified Yakuza in Japan are over 50. Since the 1990s new, tough, anti-organised crime laws, the arrest of senior Yakuza members, and stiff jail sentences have all combined to reduce the organisation's power and appeal to prospective new members.

And so once again the Yakuza - once so powerful and influential in Japanese society - may be returning to their less glamorous, but no less more factual, origins. Among the Edo period *tekiya* (street peddlers) and *bakuto* (gamblers) are to be found the true origins of the Yakuza and the genesis of their still preferred modes of organisation.

Tekiya, selling cheap talismans, religious symbols and decorations from carts and stalls in towns and villages across



FULL-BODY TATTOOING

Tattooing remains central to Yakuza identity, but *irezumi* has a deeper spiritual meaning than often realised

Full-body tattooing (*irezumi*) remains common among Yakuza in Japan. The process can take years, including tattooing the genitals in some cases, and if done traditionally involves no electrical machines but rather is 'hand-poked' with the ink inserted beneath the skin using needles of sharpened bamboo or steel.

Again, as with *yubitsume*, tattoos are an easy identifier to police of Yakuza membership and this is one reason that long-sleeved shirts, suits and shirts with neck collars are worn. The tattoos are not normally displayed in public.

Tattooing is symbolic of the Yakuza's outsider status. In the Edo period criminals were tattooed to identify their crimes – thieves on the arms, murderers on the head. Other tattoos would indicate where the crimes occurred. The Meiji government sought to outlaw tattooing altogether, creating a stigma against the practice in wider society, but embraced by the Yakuza.

> "AMONG THE EDO PERIOD *TEKIYA* AND *BAKUTO* ARE TO BE FOUND THE TRUE ORIGINS OF THE YAKUZA"

Japan, were considered very low class in the Edo period, almost outcasts. Scorned by society, they organised themselves, coming to control the lucrative Shinto temple fairs held of Buddhist holidays, hiring security to keep out other vendors, and enforcing price controls to maintain profits. It was essentially a protection racket that became gradually more sophisticated and, through vendor fees, quite profitable. As they grew in size and fiscal reserves *tekiya* introduced hierarchies into their organisations, formalising their power structures. *Oyabun* (bosses) were at the top and *kobun* (gang members) below, the *oyabun* as father to his *kobun* children. To this day Yakuza groups refer to themselves as families – not of blood, but of *oyabun-kobun* loyalties and deference. At this point the confusion between the Yakuza as heirs of the samurai can occur. Powerful *oyabuns* were granted samurai-like privileges, including bearing swords.

If anything the *bakuto* were even lower on the social scale than *tekiya*. Street peddling was a low-class occupation, but it was legal. Gambling was not. The *bakuto* similarly banded together, opening gambling parlours, providing their own protection, paying off the authorities to look the other way. Naturally, as an extension of gambling, they began loansharking with extortionate interest rates and violent penalties for non-payment. The very name Yakuza is derived from a Japanese card game popular in *bakuto* gambling dens. Careers were made. Shimizu Jirocho, a penniless *bakuto* in the 19th century, rose to become a legendary *oyabun* controlling the whole of Japan's eastern seaboard, including what is today modern Tokyo.

ASSOCIATION OF MISFITS

And so the *tekiya* and the *bakuto* expanded and grew, worked together, and found common cause in their outsider status, attracting those drawn to criminality and not fitting in with Edo society. New businesses emerged – fake and stolen goods, cheap low-end produce disguised and sold as higher quality in the markets. *Bakuto*-run gambling dens became notorious for fixed dice games and card cheats.

As new members joined, initiation rituals were created. Those that still exist today are not so different – the mutual sharing of sake with the *oyabun*, known as *sakazuki*. The *oyabun* pours two cups, they drink from each other's, and then an elaborate dinner is served. The new *kobun* renounces all ties to his blood family and swears to serve his new one – his Yakuza clan. And it is all male with the exception of some boss's wives, who hold a special place in the organisations as *ane-san* (older sisters).

Not overly elaborate perhaps compared to more ritualistic initiations as practised by, say, many Chinese triad gangs, but historically rooted in the days of the *tekiya* and the *bakuto*. And so are most of the contemporary Yakuza's core activities – loansharking, smuggling, prostitution, people trafficking, all early criminal enterprises that could be traced back to the days of the *tekiya* and the *bakuto* running gambling dens, brothels, extortion and protection, fake luxury goods, loansharking, and kidnapping. Later businesses – pyramid schemes, internet scams and pornography, crypto stings and narcotics are simply natural extensions of traditional businesses as global networks, tastes and technology have changed.

Within this world of latter-day *tekiya* and *bakuto* there is little room for the traditional notions of samurai pride, *bushido*, or chivalric organisations. Gangsters the world over may see themselves as warriors, knights, soldiers, and samurai… but invariably, as with today's Japanese Yakuza, the root is simple criminal protectionism.

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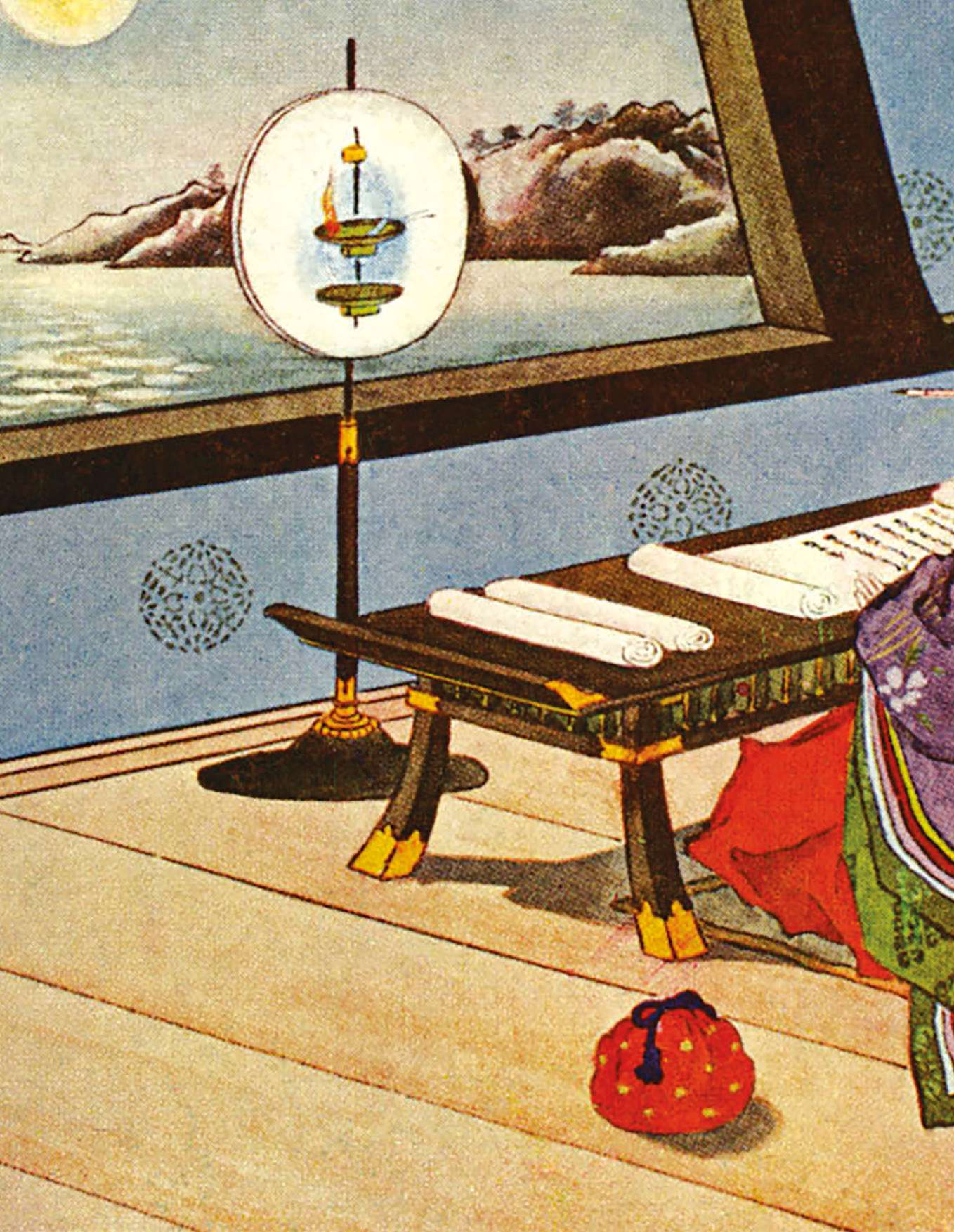
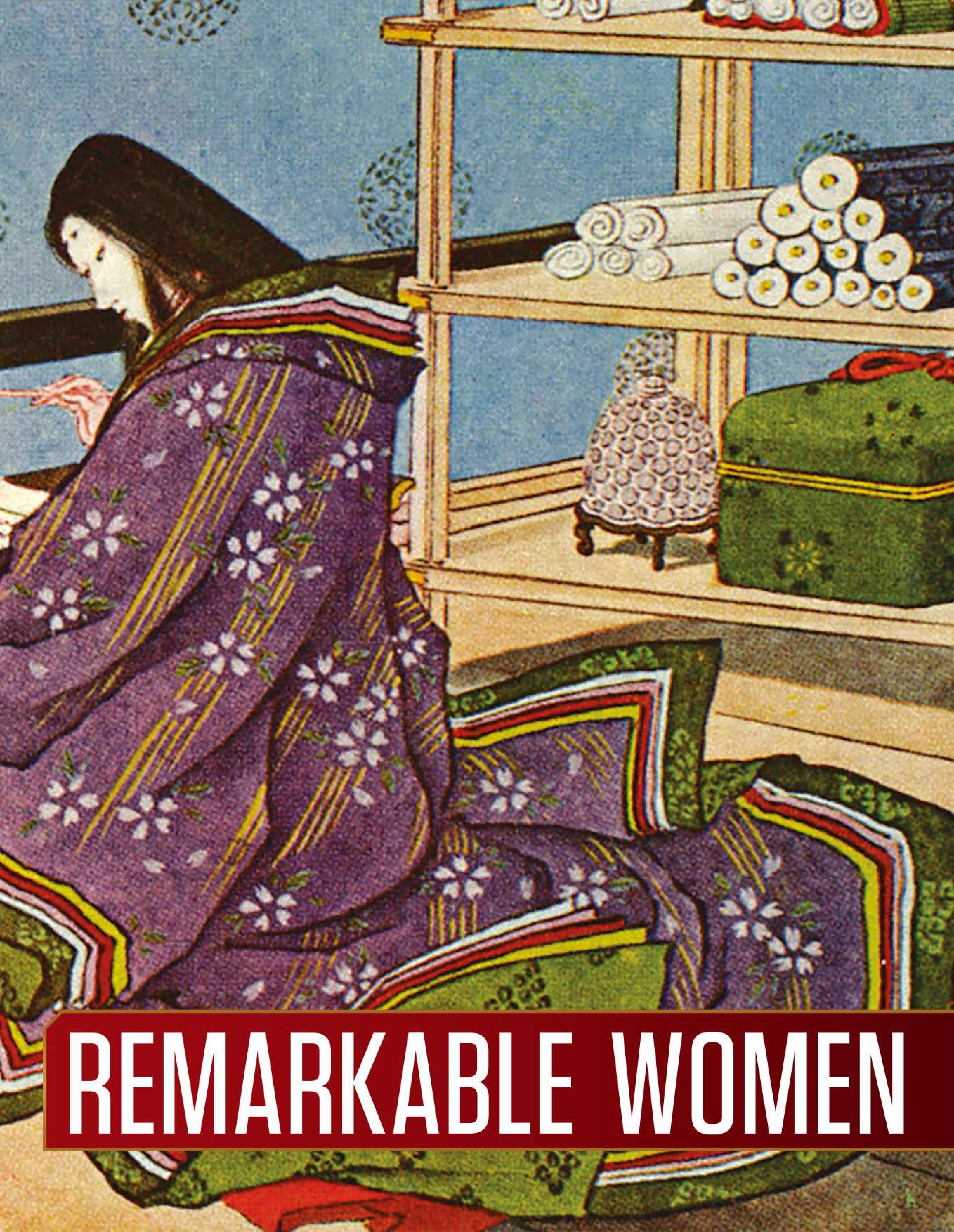
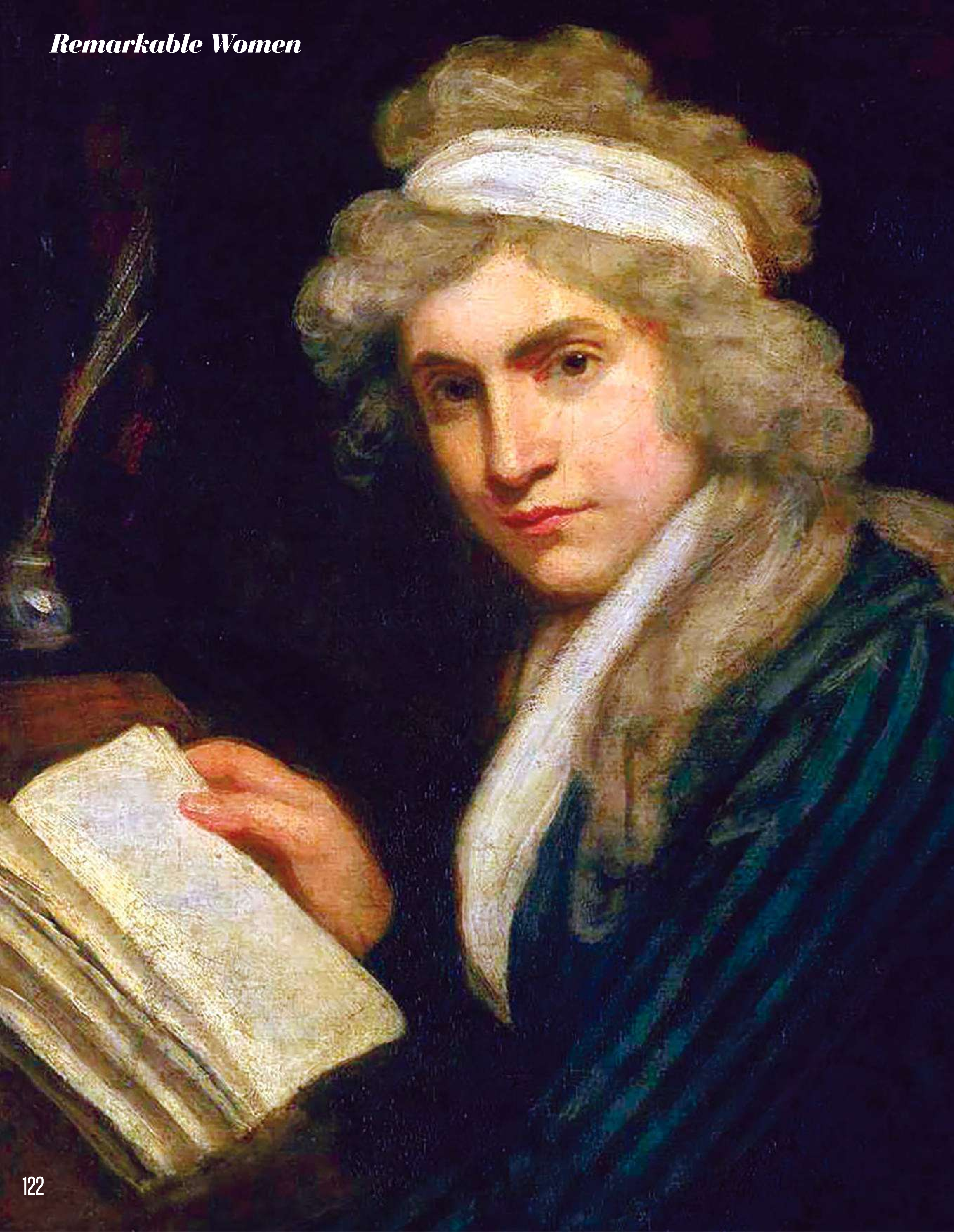




REMARKABLE WOMEN

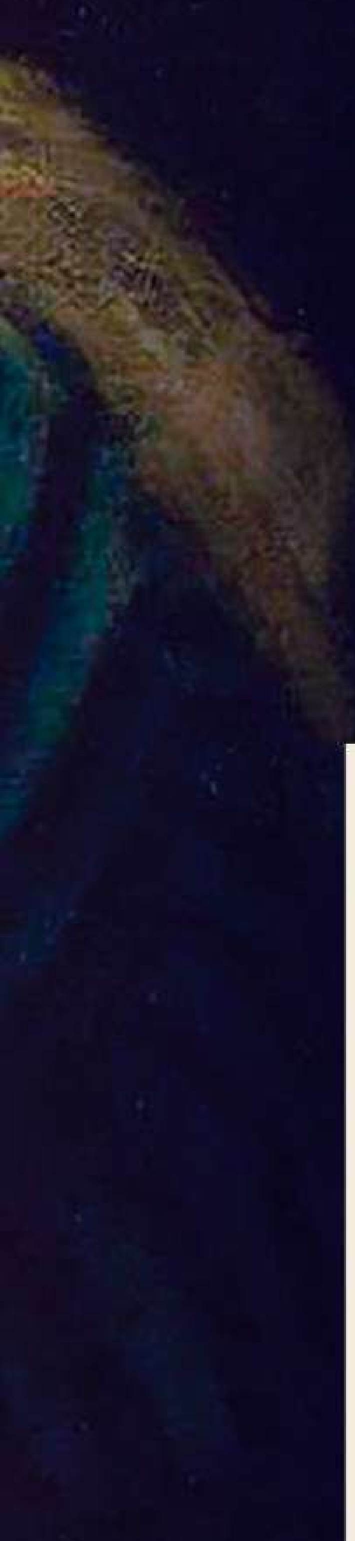


Mary Wollstonecraft

THE FIRST FEMINIST?

The fiercely determined, focused and independent life of one of the most remarkable women of the 18th century

Written by Arisa Loomba



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Emotionally tumultuous, the life of Mary Wollstonecraft was shaped by the people that came in and out of it, and her relationships to the people and world around her. Wollstonecraft's life may have been tragically short, but she ensured an enduring legacy. In 37 years she travelled, wrote on a wealth of topics across a number of genres and for all kinds of audiences, and today she is still remembered as a pioneer of the movement to ensure women's rights; the 'mother of feminism'. She is best remembered for writing *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects* (1792).

Wollstonecraft was born in 1759 in London, one of seven siblings. When she died on the 10 September 1797 of septicaemia, only 11 days after the birth of her second daughter, she was just 37 years old. She began life in East London, in Spitalfields, living among the hustle and bustle of one of London's busiest markets, amid the dirty streets and filthy air, the flow of vendors, meat and waste was constant, but her family was originally of some means.

EXPERT BIO

DR SYLVANA TOMASELLI

Dr Tomaselli is a fellow of St John's College, Cambridge. Her speciality and expertise is in the 18th century history of political theory and thought, and womanhood in Britain and France. Her book *Wollstonecraft: Philosophy, Passion and Politics* is available now in paperback from Princeton University Press.

The young Wollstonecraft was raised and weaned at her wet nurse's home, a figure whom she considered a surrogate mother. The family drifted from relative social and economic comfort and stability, to hardship, within a few years. Having lost their money, they moved around the country, living in rural areas in Epping and Yorkshire, but Wollstonecraft felt she remained a Londoner always. Her father was often drunk and often violent to both her and her mother. This was a traumatic experience for Wollstonecraft, who as a result formed difficult relationships with many members of her family. She is said to have "mothered and smothered" her sisters, according to historian Janet Todd, trying to direct their lives, telling them what they ought to do. These codependent relationships led to strife and resentment.

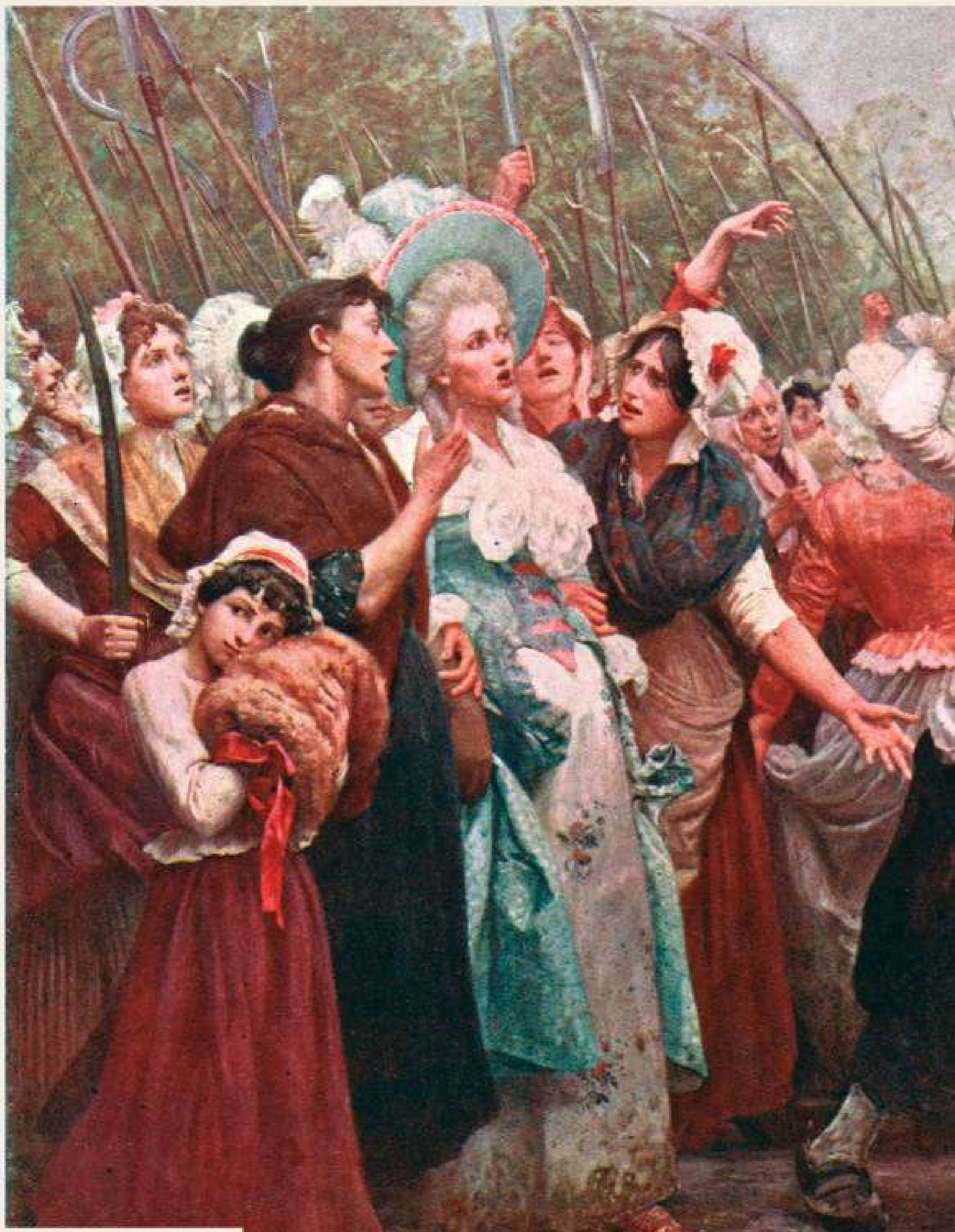
Was Wollstonecraft a typical woman of her time, though? Were there other women doing what

▶

she was doing? Thankfully we have Dr Sylvana Tomaselli, a fellow of St John's College, Cambridge to help us answer these questions. Her speciality and expertise is in the 18th century history of political theory and thought, and womanhood in Britain and France. She has written a book on the life and thought of Mary Wollstonecraft entitled *Wollstonecraft: Philosophy, Passion and Politics*. Tomaselli says: "If you compare her to other middle class or impoverished middle class women, she's better educated, but that's because she makes the most of every single opportunity to educate herself. She has some opportunities because she meets a number of people in her youth who help her expand her horizons and lend her books and engage with her.

"The important thing there is not just to think about how young or old Wollstonecraft was when she died, but to think about… the links of her intellectual life because for someone who doesn't have a formal education, one starts one's intellectual life at a later stage and in very different conditions. So, you might think of her really starting an intellectual life in her mid-20s… If one is to compare her, for example, to Edmund Burke, who lives a longer life and starts publishing and thinking and editing a journal much earlier – that's the overall context."

Few women without an aristocratic background could have made a mark on political thought like Wollstonecraft. Her life was largely comfortable, but she was one of the first women to do what she did, without coming from upper class means. It was financial need that led Wollstonecraft to begin writing reviews. "She is a writer who engages in a number of zones not always out of choice, largely, but not solely out of financial necessity," Tomaselli explains. "And that is because her family, which was comfortable – not hugely wealthy by the standards of the day, but nonetheless comfortable – their wealth was squandered by her father. And so she goes from gentile youth to a position in which she has to maintain herself and so do her sisters in their late teens and 20s. She takes on a number of



ABOVE French women march on Versailles on 5 October 1789

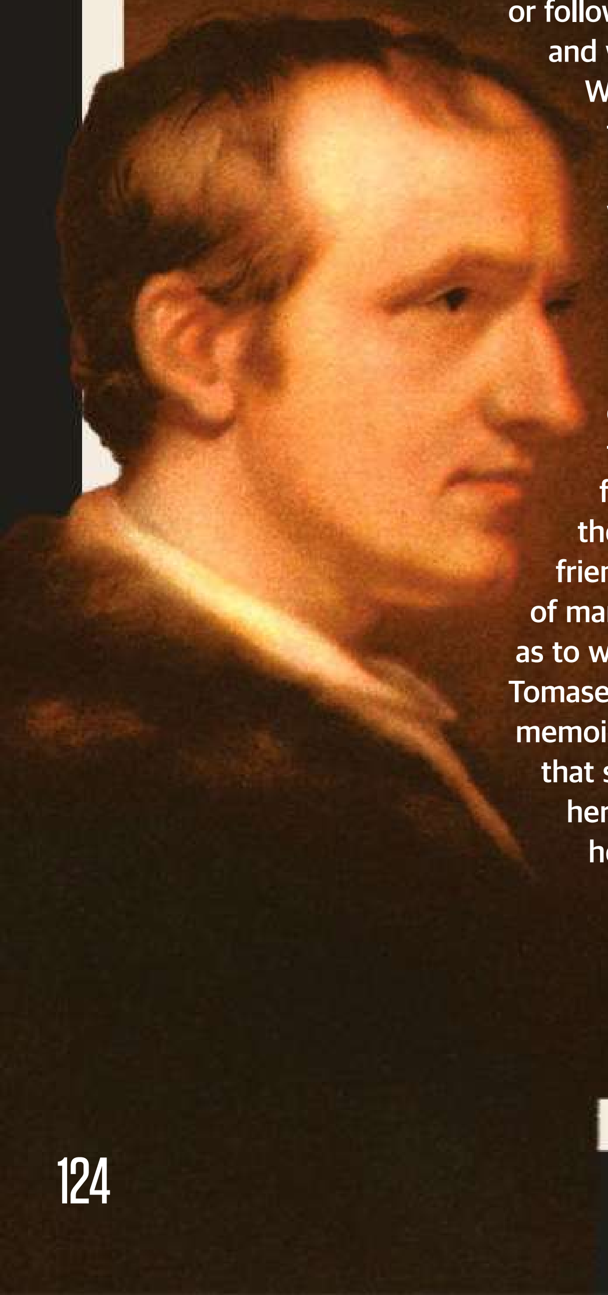
"She makes the most of every single opportunity to educate herself"

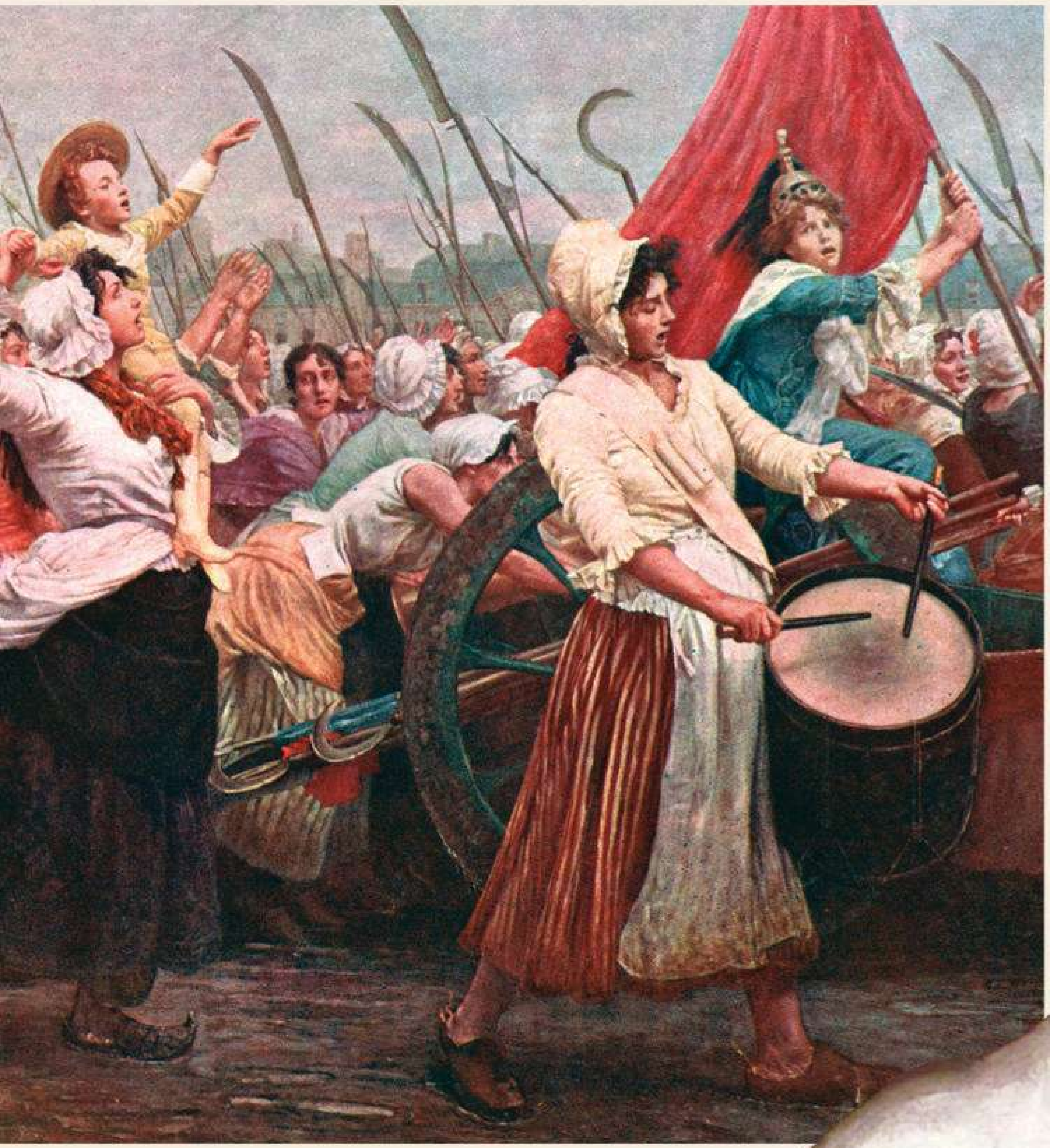
Unlucky in love

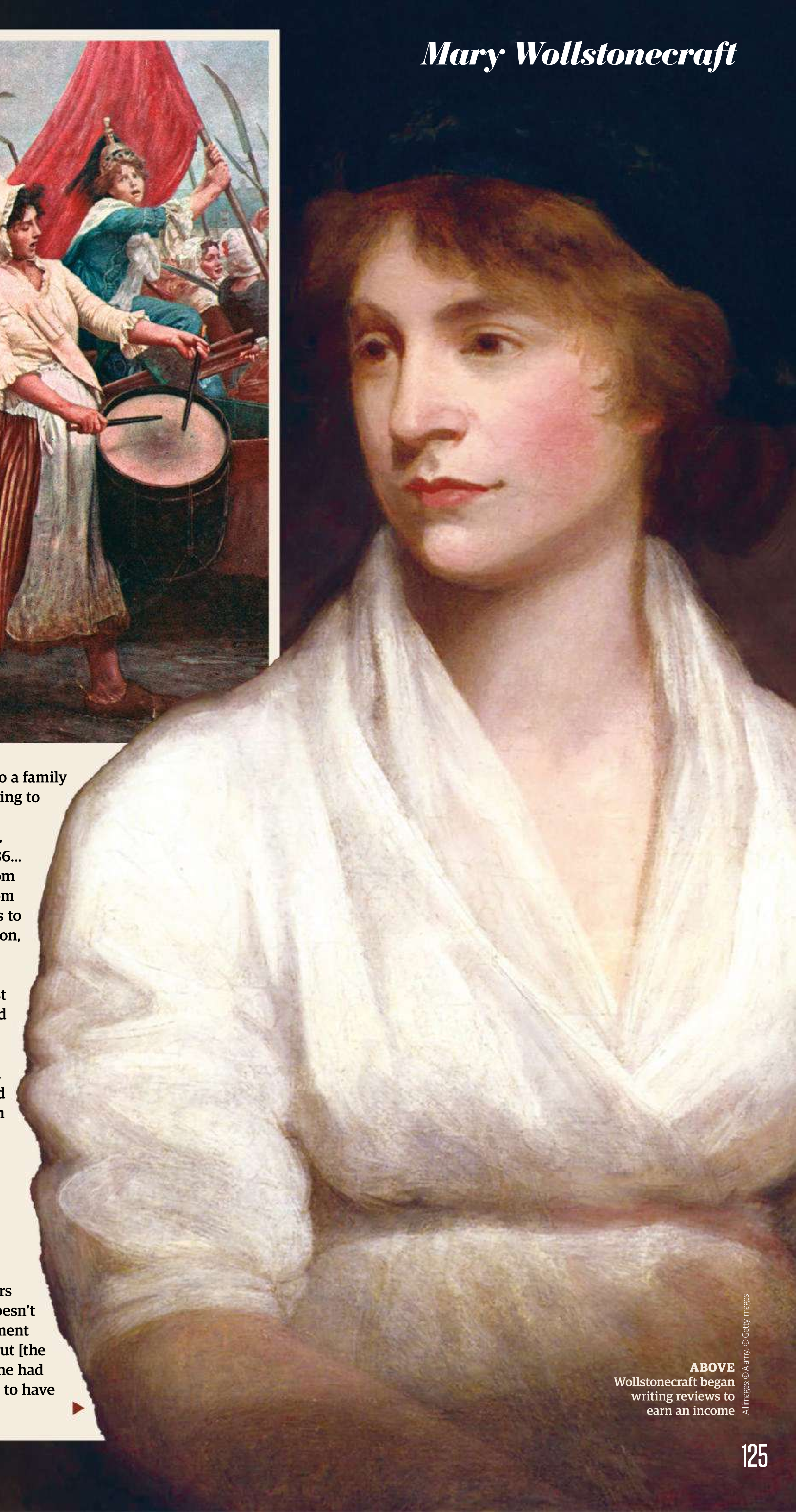
The incomplete and unfinished relationships that impacted Mary Wollstonecraft's life

Wollstonecraft went to France in 1792 "partly to be able to write about what is happening," says Tomaselli. "It's partly because she's curious – she has political curiosity. She's not the only woman to report to live in Paris and report back to England. Nonetheless it's very much part of her character… just pack up and go. And when there she meets the father of her first child, Gilbert Imlay." He is an American businessman, and together they have a child out of wedlock. This reframes her life almost completely. She passes as his wife and lives with him, which increases her safety as a woman living in revolutionary France, as well as their child's, who had a 'legitimate' father. "While she still has hope of continuing a relationship with him, he loses a cargo that he has an investment – in a cargo carrying bullion – which disappears," Tomaselli explains. "She and their child Fanny go to Scandinavia to in search of this missing cargo. And it's from there that she writes (initially really only addressed to him) her [famous travel] letters, reporting, but partly trying to seduce him back." Tragically for Wollstonecraft, though, Imlay left on business multiple times, and though Wollstonecraft waits or follows him, he eventually left, never to return, and was discovered to be living with an actress. Wollstonecraft's heartbreak and abandonment took a great emotional and physical toll.

Wollstonecraft then met a journalist and writer named William Godwin at a dinner party hosted by Joseph Johnson. "But he doesn't like her," Tomaselli tells us. "And maybe she didn't like him either. But [some years later] when the relationship with Imlay is, much to her regret, completely finished, she and Godwin begin to fall passionately in love." Wollstonecraft fell pregnant once more, and to legitimise the child, they marry, "which is a shock to his friends because he was a critic of the institution of marriage… And it then starts to open questions as to whether [Wollstonecraft] was married before." Tomaselli explains what Godwin did next; "[He] writes a memoir [disclosing] details of her life, including the fact that she was not married and therefore had a child, her first child out of wedlock with Imlay." Though he claimed to have been revealing the truth of her life out of love and respect, it had a profoundly negative effect. Scandal and dishonour was brought upon Wollstonecraft's name, and her reputation was tarnished for over a century to come.







positions, including a companion governess to a family in Ireland. But in terms of writing, she is looking to make some money.

"Her first publication is a pedagogical work, *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* in 1786… She also translates three major works, one from French, another from German, and a third from Dutch… Shortly before she dies, after she goes to France to witness part of the French Revolution, she travels to Scandinavia from which she writes and publishes letters. So she's also a travel writer." Of course, Wollstonecraft is best remembered for her political commentary and writing. "[She] writes the first 'vindication' on the rights of men in answer to Edmund Burke. So she's multifaceted," adds Tomaselli. This versatility was borne of both passion and necessity, leaving a literary legacy that is both widespread and rich.

Tomaselli argues that it is vital to explore Wollstonecraft's writing in all its fullness to best understand the woman herself, and the times she lived in. "I think that however important one deems *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, it should not obscure her other works, not least the *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, which she had written two years prior to *Rights of Woman*," she explains. "It doesn't diminish her to recognise that in her engagement with Edmund Burke… she starts thinking about [the rights of women] now." It's likely it's a topic she had pondered before, but Burke's approach seems to have spurred her on.

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ABOVE
Wollstonecraft began writing reviews to earn an income

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

"The other spirit, of course, is the fact that she hopes that the French in the early stages will reform education not just for boys, but also for girls - which they don't," explains Tomaselli. "Not only do they not do that, the revolution is, one might say, retrograde for the freedom of women. They lose far more than they gain, or they don't gain anything. So, it's important to see that she didn't just come up with this sense, and it doesn't, as I said, diminish her. She's involved in the intellectual life, she responds to it, she absorbs it, she transforms it, she's a participant, and all participants in a conversation are shaped by what the interlocutors say, just as what I'm saying now is shaped by what you're saying and to a degree, vice versa, you see?"

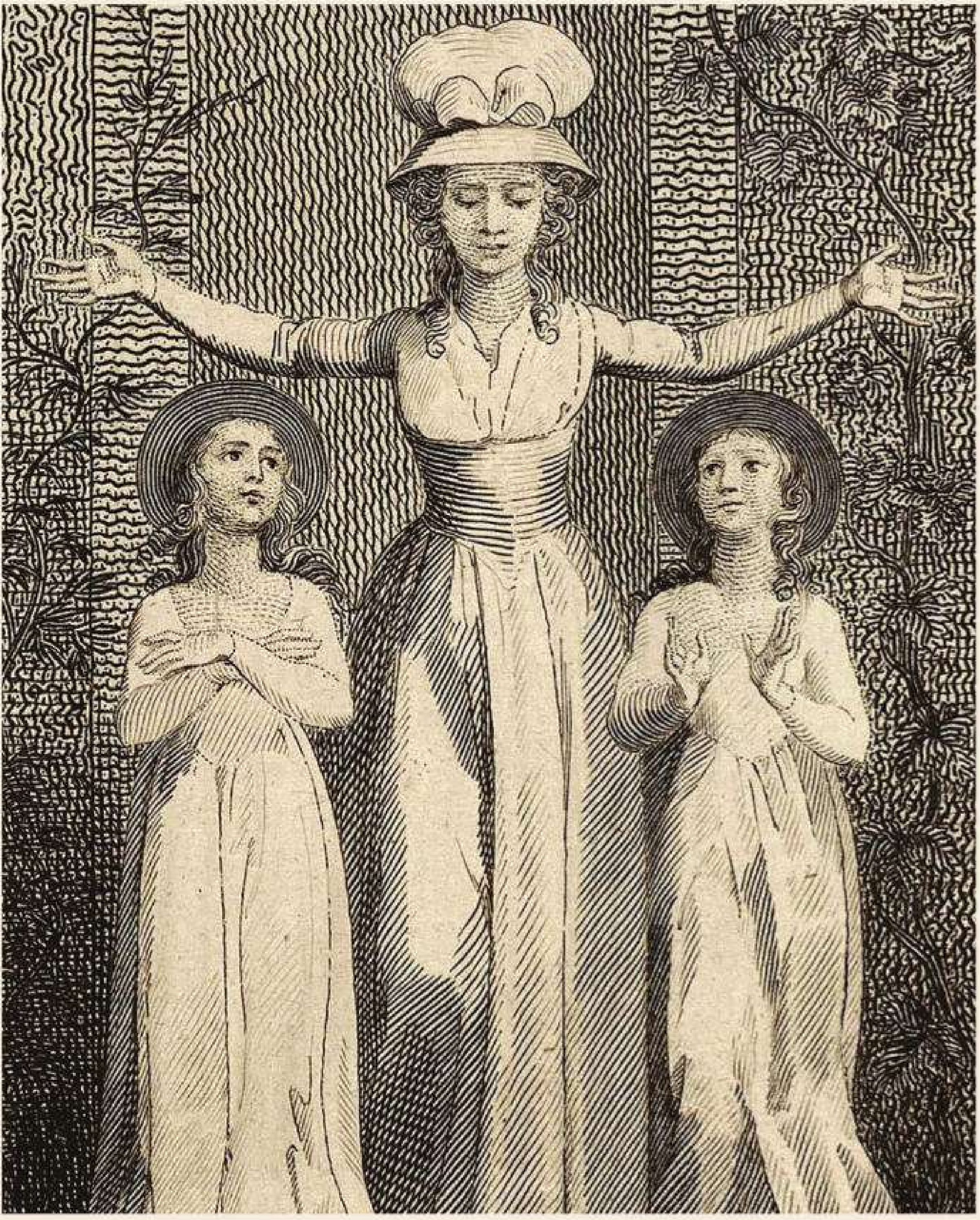
It is in this lively context of writing, imagining and thinking, during the uncertainties brought about by the French Revolution, when it seemed that the world might be turning upside down, that Wollstonecraft writes her most famous work, a plea for the rights of women. She calls for better education for girls and for the equality of men and women in many areas. But what she does not claim, and what would be maybe too radical for her time, is to say that men and women were actually equal. The work was crucial to the later movement for women's suffrage, particularly in the USA in the 19th century. It is essentially a long essay that stipulates the natural rights of women, ordained by God. Discussions of female sensibility, class and republicanism are all central to her argument.

Wollstonecraft was not writing in isolation. She was part of an active network and community of thinkers, writers and activists. "There are more [women] in her circles," says Tomaselli. "There are highly educated women; there are a number of women, and this has been so at least since the 17th century in England, who have access to libraries, who want to learn, they want to be knowledgeable, they want to understand the world. So they're very, very interested, perhaps more so than their brothers." Although Wollstonecraft was not a dissenter herself, she moved to Newington Green, where a community of dissenters lived, and met Richard Price, who was one of the leading intellectuals. She also met her publisher, Joseph Johnson, who continued to send work her way. She also started a school in Newington Green which she hoped would help her sisters to make a living, although this unfortunately closed down after only a brief existence.

Tomaselli feels it's important to remember that Wollstonecraft was not alone or entirely unique: "With every passing day, more scholarship is devoted to many of [Wollstonecraft's] contemporaries, women before her and after. There was a time when it seemed as though she was the only one, partly because Catherine Macaulay, for example, who was much more famous in her time… is forgotten. Whereas Wollstonecraft, her reputation dips for various reasons in the 19th century, but is never entirely forgotten, and especially not in America. And then her reputation picks up again in the 20th century." As with all historical figures, the story of Wollstonecraft, and how she is talked about, has changed over time, according to the trends of history writing and feminism. In the 1970s, Wollstonecraft was essentially put on a pedestal as the mother of feminism, despite having been relatively unknown beforehand.

BELOW-LEFT Illustration from Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories from Real Life*

BELOW-RIGHT Maggi Hambling's controversial statue of Wollstonecraft



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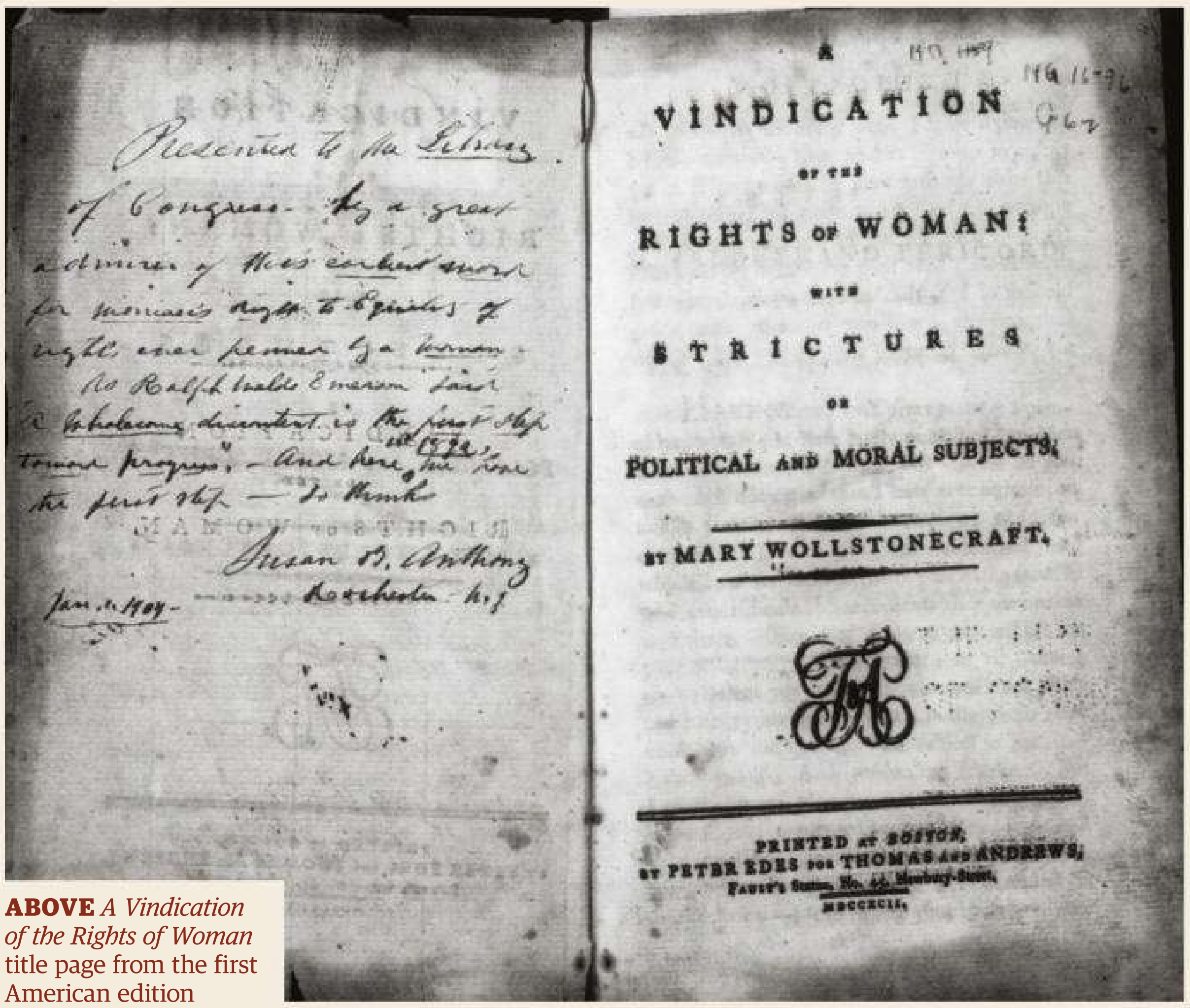


Presented to the Library of Congress - by a great admirer of this earliest work for woman's right to Equality of rights ever penned by a woman. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said "a wholesome discontent is the first step toward progress" - And here in 1792 was the first step - So think

Susan B. Anthony
Rochester N.Y.
Jan. 1. 1904-

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
RIGHTS OF WOMAN:
WITH
STRICTURES
ON
POLITICAL AND MORAL SUBJECTS.
BY MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

PRINTED AT BOSTON,
BY PETER EDES FOR THOMAS AND ANDREWS,
FAUST'S Statue, No. 45, Newbury-Street,
MDCCXCII.

ABOVE *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* title page from the first American edition

Tomaselli says that with the rise of feminism in the 20th century, there are many biographies written about Wollstonecraft, particularly her emotional life, love life and the scandals attached to her relating to illegitimate children and the two suicide attempts that she survived. Tomaselli reflects that it is sad that after her death, her life has been reduced or cheapened by these explorations of her life. Instead, she has tried to "resist looking at her life and tried to think about her ideas," although she admits that it is "very difficult then to keep the life completely apart… because it was so turbulent".

Through all that turmoil, thanks to her relationships and marriage, she was able to remain in a stable and comfortable position. Therefore it is important to remember that while she espoused radical ideas for her time, her financial status in life meant that she was able to become a prominent thinker in a way that many women would never have considered possible. It is also crucial to bear in mind how her station in life influenced how famous and renowned she was able to become as well as appreciate the writing that survived her.

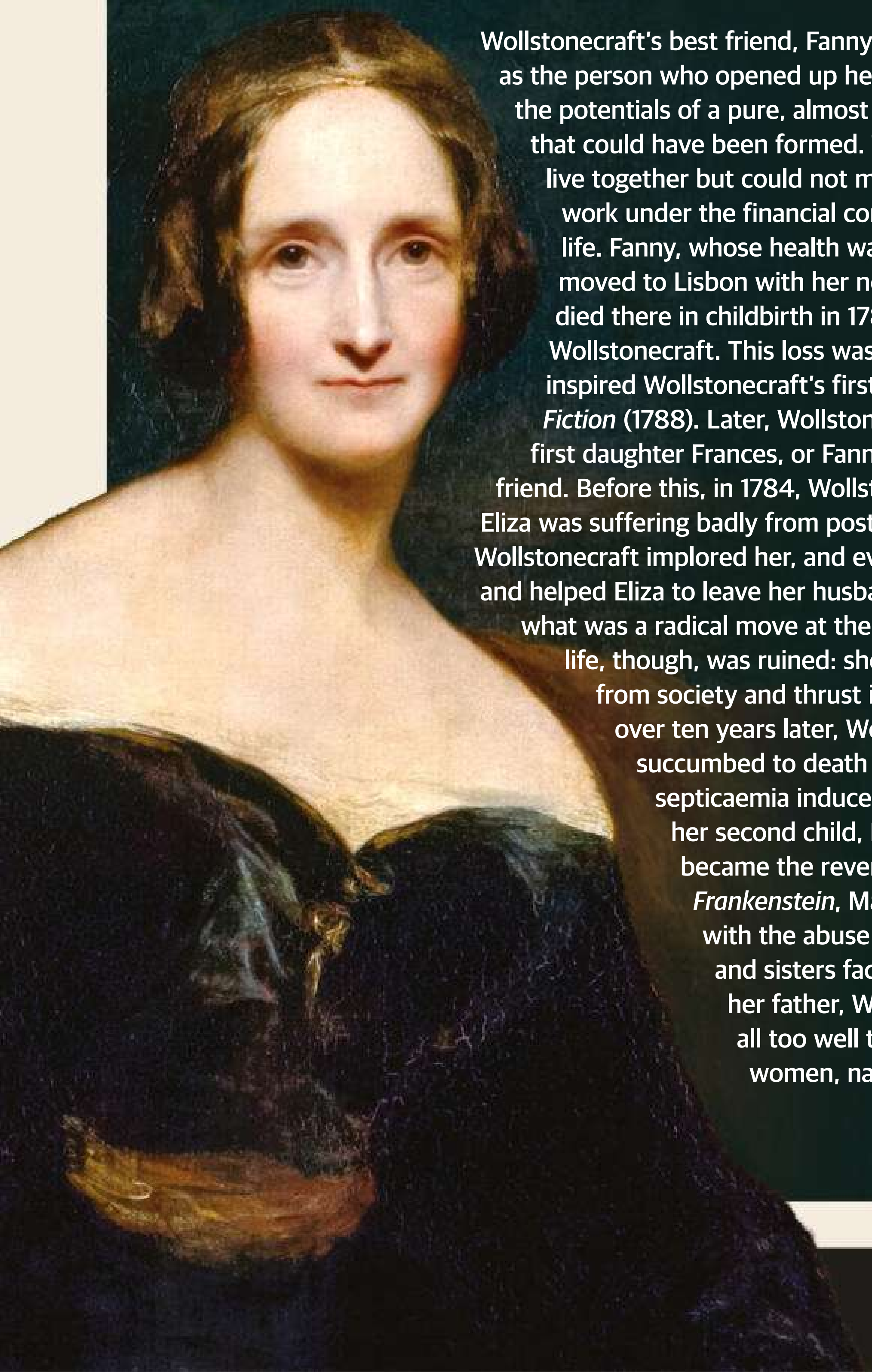
Feminism was not a concept or word used in the 18th century and many later feminists would say that Wollstonecraft's politics were not radical or demanding enough to truly advocate for women's rights in today's understanding. However, we asked Tomaselli whether we can call Wollstonecraft a feminist, a proto-feminist or whether it is best to avoid labels and categorisation altogether: "One can call her feminist if one wants to, if by feminism one means somebody who considers the condition of women and thinks about their freedom, or lack thereof, and thinks about their inequality and the question of improving their condition and putting an end to inequality. The difficulty I have is that once you label somebody like that… she's a feminist and she's written *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, obscuring everything else. And then also the other thing that happened is feminists saying: 'Ah yes, but she doesn't criticise marriage and seems to assume women will have children'." From this came a kind of backlash. It is certainly crucial to consider Wollstonecraft in the context of her own life and times, in this sense.

"A complex, troubled and often contradictory woman"

"You don't have to agree with her, but the point is to engage with somebody who is intellectually alive and doesn't stick to her ideas [or become] fixated," concludes Tomaselli. Wollstonecraft has indeed been engaged with, debated and memorialised at all levels of popular culture since her lifetime. A rather controversial statue of Wollstonecraft by Maggi Hambling has recently been erected to commemorate her in Newington Green. The statue is of a naked, short-haired woman, hinting at Wollstonecraft's utopian and radical visions for the future of women's emancipation and liberation from the constraints of a paternalistic and patriarchal world. But others have stated that even Wollstonecraft was not radical enough for a statue like this, being far too crass, simplistic and bold for a woman of the 18th century. A complex, troubled and often contradictory woman, both confined by society and often on the move, Wollstonecraft's evolving legacy has been taken hold of and held up by today's society as a symbol for women's rights in the modern world. ○

A woman's destiny

Motherhood, tragedy and hardship were brutally linked throughout Wollstonecraft's life



Wollstonecraft's best friend, Fanny, whom she named as the person who opened up her mind, embodied the potentials of a pure, almost holy female utopia that could have been formed. They planned to live together but could not make this dream work under the financial constraints of their life. Fanny, whose health was always poor, moved to Lisbon with her new husband, and died there in childbirth in 1785, nursed by Wollstonecraft. This loss was devastating, and inspired Wollstonecraft's first novel *Mary: A Fiction* (1788). Later, Wollstonecraft named her first daughter Frances, or Fanny, for her dear friend. Before this, in 1784, Wollstonecraft's sister Eliza was suffering badly from postpartum depression. Wollstonecraft implored her, and eventually persuaded and helped Eliza to leave her husband and child, in what was a radical move at the time. Her sister's life, though, was ruined: she was shunned from society and thrust into poverty. Just over ten years later, Wollstonecraft herself succumbed to death after battling septicaemia induced by the birth of her second child, Mary (who later became the revered author of *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley). Along with the abuse she and her mother and sisters faced at the hands of her father, Wollstonecraft knew all too well the toll placed upon women, natural and unnatural.

MURASAKI SHIKIBU

The first novelist

Discover the mysterious Japanese noblewoman who penned a literary masterpiece

Written by Poppy-Jay St Palmer

Since the days of the earliest civilisations, storytelling has sat at the heart of communication. From tales depicted in cave paintings and hieroglyphics and passed down through the oral tradition all the way to the stories of television, cinema and even viral videos and Twitter threads, storytelling is a way of understanding the world and connecting to those around us and those living completely different lives to our own. Novels are one of the most accessible and popular methods of storytelling, but they didn't come onto the scene until the 11th century, when what is often considered to be the world's oldest novel came from an unlikely source. And like many of the world's greatest, largely anonymous innovations, it came from a woman: Japanese author Murasaki Shikibu.

You'd be forgiven for not knowing Lady Murasaki's name – even 'Lady Murasaki' is a pseudonym – as she lived during a time where the names of women were rarely recorded. Some might say she had storytelling in her blood. Born in the city now known as Kyoto in 973, she was the daughter of a scholar and the granddaughter of a famous poet. Through her upbringing she became very familiar with both Japanese and Chinese literature and poetry. During her lifetime, Japan was starting to become more isolated with the looming end of missions to China, and the country began to shape a stronger national cultural identity as a result. Japanese men continued to write formally in Chinese, but it was very unusual for a woman to do so. However, Murasaki succeeded in becoming fluent in the language, and her exposure to the arts from both countries transformed her into something of a literary prodigy. Even her own academic father was shocked to learn how talented she was. She recorded his reaction in her diary: "'Just my luck,' he said, 'what a pity she was not born a man'."

Murasaki's creative tendencies developed at an early age: she dabbled in poetry in her youth, and used the art form to ▶

> "Do they really look upon me as a dull thing, I wonder? I am what I am"

© Alamy

record some of her life and experiences. Her poems blessed future scholars with a look at the ins and outs of her world, despite the fact that we still don't know her true name. Throughout her early life, she had very little contact with men apart from her father. It was typical for noblewomen of her status to marry upon reaching puberty, but Murasaki remained in her father's household into her mid-twenties, or perhaps even her early thirties. In 996, her father was posted to a four-year governorship in Echizen Province, and Murasaki decided to accompany him. But she returned after just two years to marry her father's friend Fujiwara no Nobutaka, a second cousin 20 years her senior. When they wed, Nobutaka had an unknown number of other wives, as well as various children to some of those wives. Murasaki added a daughter, Kenshi, to the brood when she was born in 999. However, Murasaki was left alone once more just two years later when Nobutaka died during a cholera epidemic.

Many would have expected Murasaki to seek out a new partner following her husband's death, but she once again defied expectations. Instead, she began work on *The Tale of Genji*, a story that would come to be considered as the greatest work of Japanese literature, as well as the world's first novel. *The Tale of Genji* follows the life of an imperial prince in the form of a sweeping and intricate romantic saga. It was quite unlike anything anyone had ever written before.

As well as telling a chronological tale of the events surrounding her fictional protagonist set in the culture of the aristocracy in Early Heian Japan, it also dives beneath the surface and offers deep psychological insight into the characters' lives, something that is believed to have never been done before. Today, most novels wouldn't be complete without a peek into the inner workings of the characters, but in the 11th century it was nothing short of genius. It is more than just a story: it is an exploration of what it means to be human.

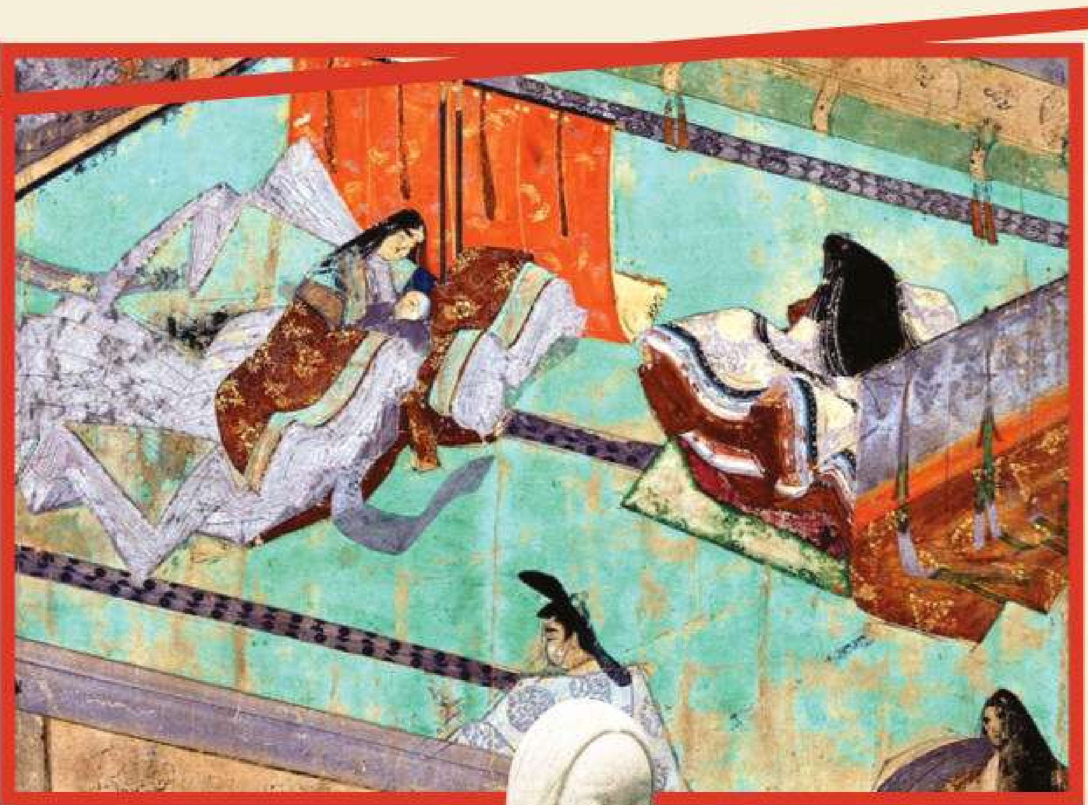
> "It was more than just a story: it was an exploration of what it means to be human"

Although Murasaki's romantic lead Genji, a handsome and sensitive courtier, is male, much of the story is told through the eyes of his female lovers. The women featured in the novel are fully multifaceted, and subvert the typical roles that men and women play in Heian court culture. It reflects how women were disadvantaged and disempowered by their environment, and explores the ways in which women could play the system to gain control. At the time it was written, aristocratic Japanese women were constantly shielded from public view by curtains or screens, hidden from men that weren't their fathers or husbands. The women in *The Tale of Genji* remove those screens, if only metaphorically, by communicating with men via written poetry passed along with the help of messengers. Curious, men begin to sneak glimpses behind the screens, and slowly but surely instigate sexual relationships with the mysterious women on the other side. From there, the novel explores how the women's relations with the right man alters the course of their lives. Through *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki offered a new look into the lives of women of her standing in a way that was both unconventional and groundbreaking.

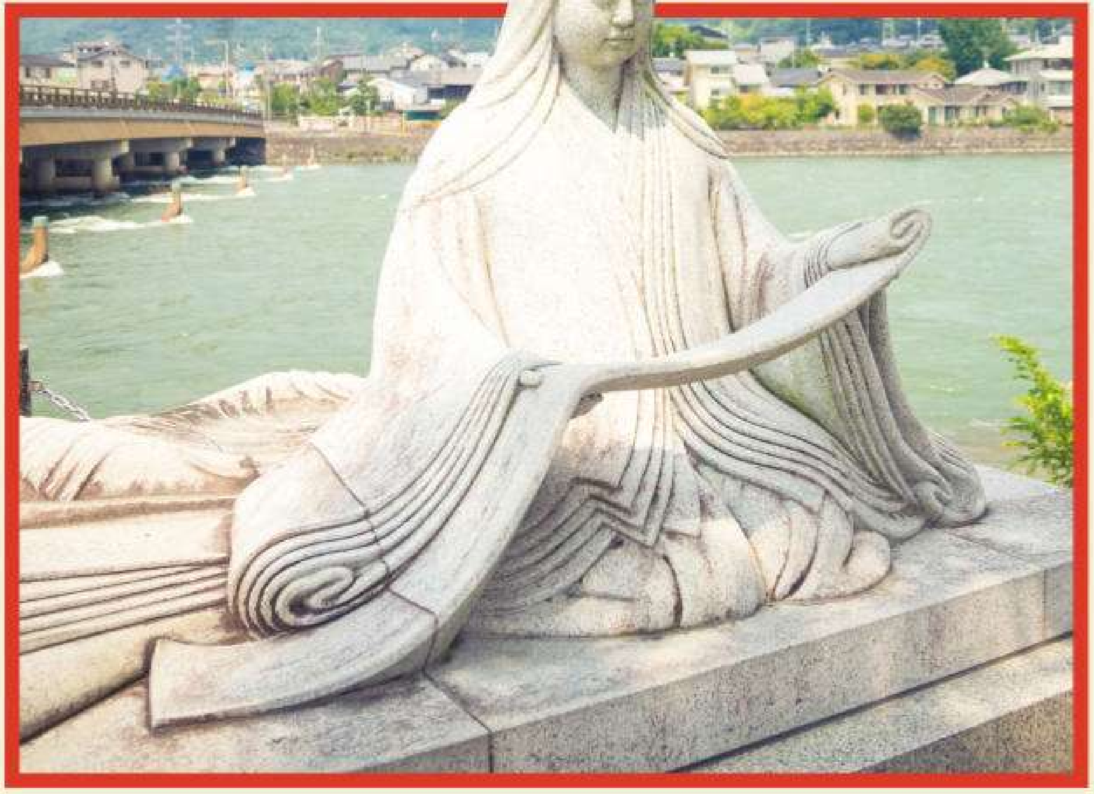
Alongside its examination of women, *The Tale of Genji* is also admired for its portrayal of historical Japanese culture, particularly the culture shared among the country's nobility. Murasaki detailed everything from the Early Heian Period's clothes, styles and entertainment to its moral code and beauties of nature. Although the tale follows intricate stories, characters and relationships from Murasaki's marvellous imagination, her picture of high society came straight from her experiences with nobility. In 1005, Murasaki was awarded an even closer look at the upper class when her pedigree as a writer led to her being invited to work at the Imperial Court itself. She served as a lady-in-waiting and occasional tutor to the teenage Empress Shōshi. It is unclear why exactly Murasaki was chosen for this particular role, but some believe that the young empress liked to surround herself with women of literary talent – her other two ladies-in-waiting were revered poets Akazome Emon and Izumi Shikibu. Always going against the grain, Murasaki took every opportunity she could to secretly teach Empress Shōshi Chinese.

Now living in the setting of her own novel, she continued to write during her service and would frequently add scenes from her court life into her other written works. But unlike the romantic, sweeping story of Genji, works like *The Diary of Lady Murasaki*, a collection of vignettes written by Murasaki around 1008 and 1010, are starkly realistic. She wrote about more mundane events and subjects, like sordid relationships, embarrassing court members and men that made her uncomfortable.

During her tenure at the Imperial Court, Murasaki was surprisingly quite unpopular, likely a result of her supposedly

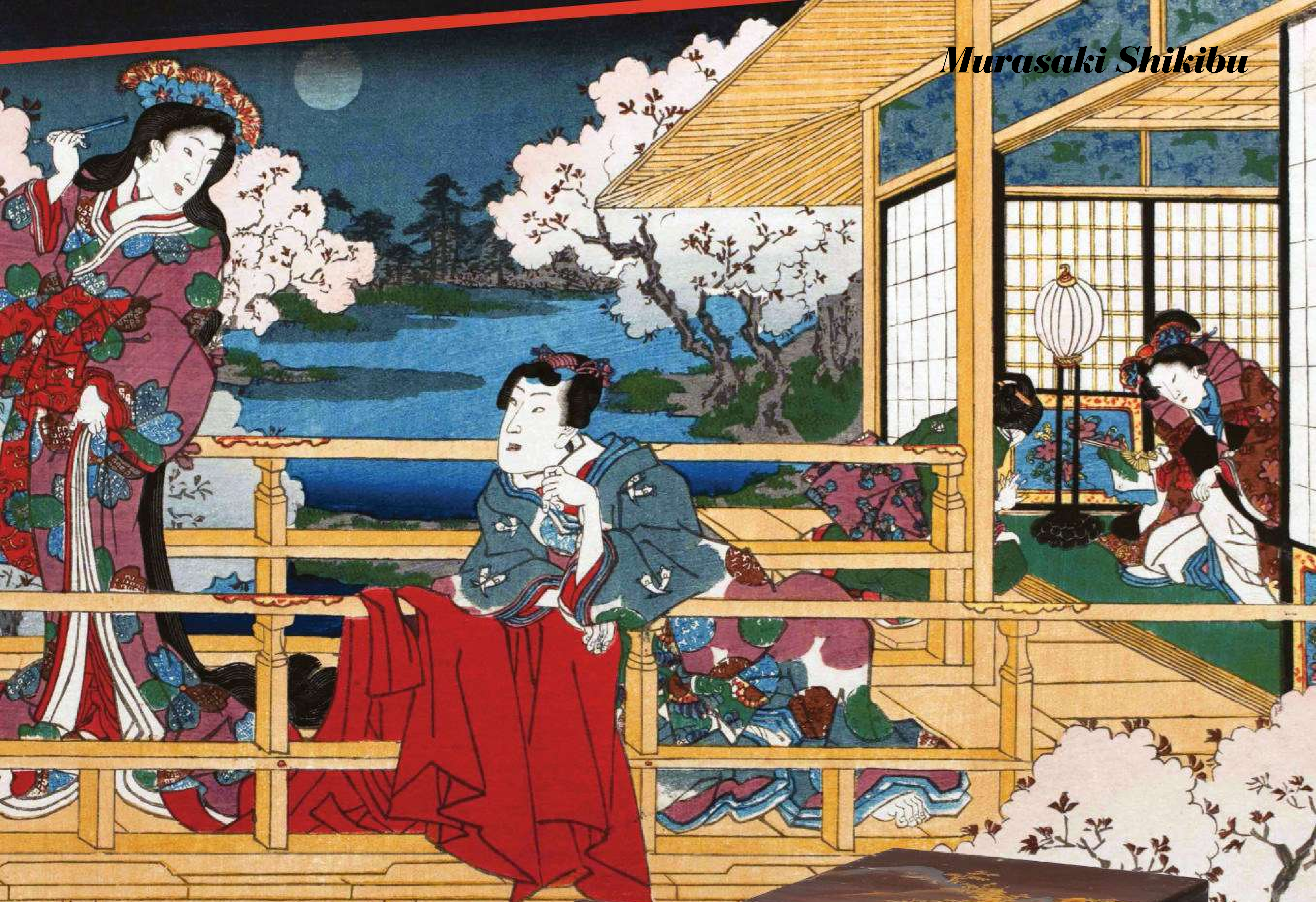


TOP During the Early Heian Era, Japanese noblewomen were often shielded from male view by screens



ABOVE Murasaki grew lonely at the Imperial Court, and eventually retired to dedicate her life to literature and religion

ABOVE-RIGHT *The Tale of Genji* depicts the lives of Japanese aristocracy in the Early Heian Era



"prickly" personality, and often found herself the subject of gossip and alienation. In *The Diary of Lady Murasaki*, she expresses her umbrage at her reputation: "'Well, we never expected this!' they all say. 'No one liked her. They all said she was so pretentious, awkward, difficult to approach, prickly, too fond of her tales, haughty, prone to versifying, disdainful, cantankerous, and scornful. But when you meet her, she is strangely meek, a completely different person altogether!' How embarrassing! Do they really look upon me as a dull thing, I wonder? I am what I am."

Both the death of her husband and her unfavourable reputation meant Murasaki was no stranger to loneliness. At the Imperial Court, she became withdrawn and eventually retired to dedicate the rest of her life to literature and Buddhism. Her year of death is unknown but some believe it to be 1014, making her just 41 years old when she died. Despite the scarcity of meaningful connections in her own life, her work served to connect readers of the era with a powerful, insightful look into the relationships that make us human. Her ingenious approach to storytelling undoubtedly opened up whole new worlds to the writers that came after her, making her perhaps one of the most influential contributors to literature that ever lived. And it's certainly astonishing that not only was the world's first novel a romance (and a literary masterpiece of a romance at that), it was written by a nameless woman with an extraordinary voice.

ABOVE A lacquer case built to hold the 54 volumes of the *Tale of Genji*

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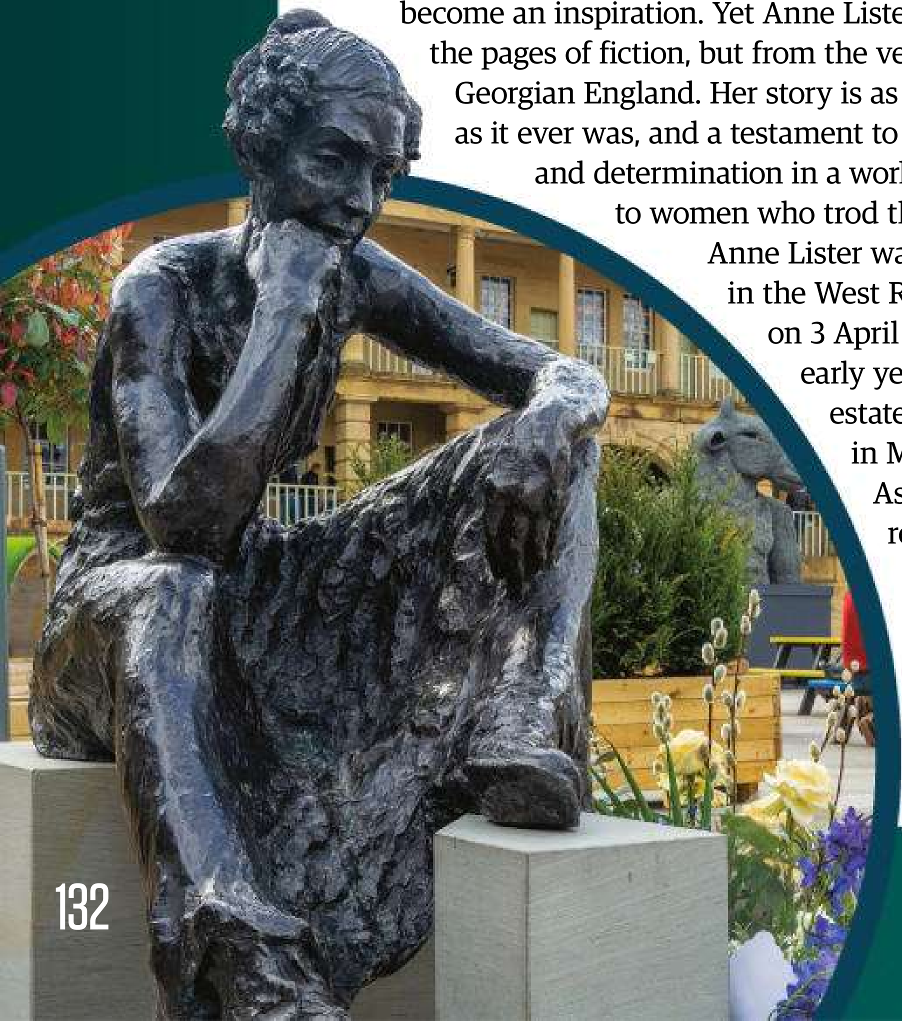
The Life of GENTLEMAN JACK

Anne Lister was a true trailblazer, and today her story continues to inspire

Written by Catherine Curzon

Today, the name of Yorkshire businesswoman and trailblazing lesbian Anne Lister is known to audiences across the globe. Thanks to *Gentleman Jack*, BBC/HBO's enormously successful biographical drama, Lister's life and her refusal to compromise on her ideals and passions have become an inspiration. Yet Anne Lister sprang not from the pages of fiction, but from the very real world of Georgian England. Her story is as remarkable today as it ever was, and a testament to her intelligence and determination in a world that wasn't used to women who trod their own path.



LEFT A 2021 statue of Anne Lister by Diane Lawrenson at Piece Hall, Halifax

Anne Lister was born in Halifax, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, on 3 April 1791, and spent her early years on the family estate of Skelfler House in Market Weighton. As a child she was a regular visitor to her aunt and uncle's estate at Shibden Hall, which the landowning Lister family had owned since the 17th century. As a girl in the Georgian era, Anne Lister was not raised to be in business, but to be a wife. When she was seven years old she was sent to school in Ripon, and it was during the years of her education that her character and personality began to flourish.

In a world that hoped to forge little girls into ladylike adults, Anne Lister was going to break the mould. She was a fiercely intelligent and strong-willed student who was hungry to learn about the world around her. As an adult Lister indulged her passion for travel, making trips abroad that were considered ill-suited to a woman, and her curiosity for the wider world was awakened by an education that was never intended to instil a wanderlust in genteel young ladies. Lister left school to be educated at home by the vicar of Market Weighton in 1801, but at the age of 14 she was at boarding school in York.

The Manor House School is the place where Lister first fell in love. While studying she began a relationship with Eliza

> "IN A WORLD THAT HOPED TO FORGE LITTLE GIRLS INTO LADYLIKE ADULTS, ANNE LISTER WAS GOING TO BREAK THE MOULD"

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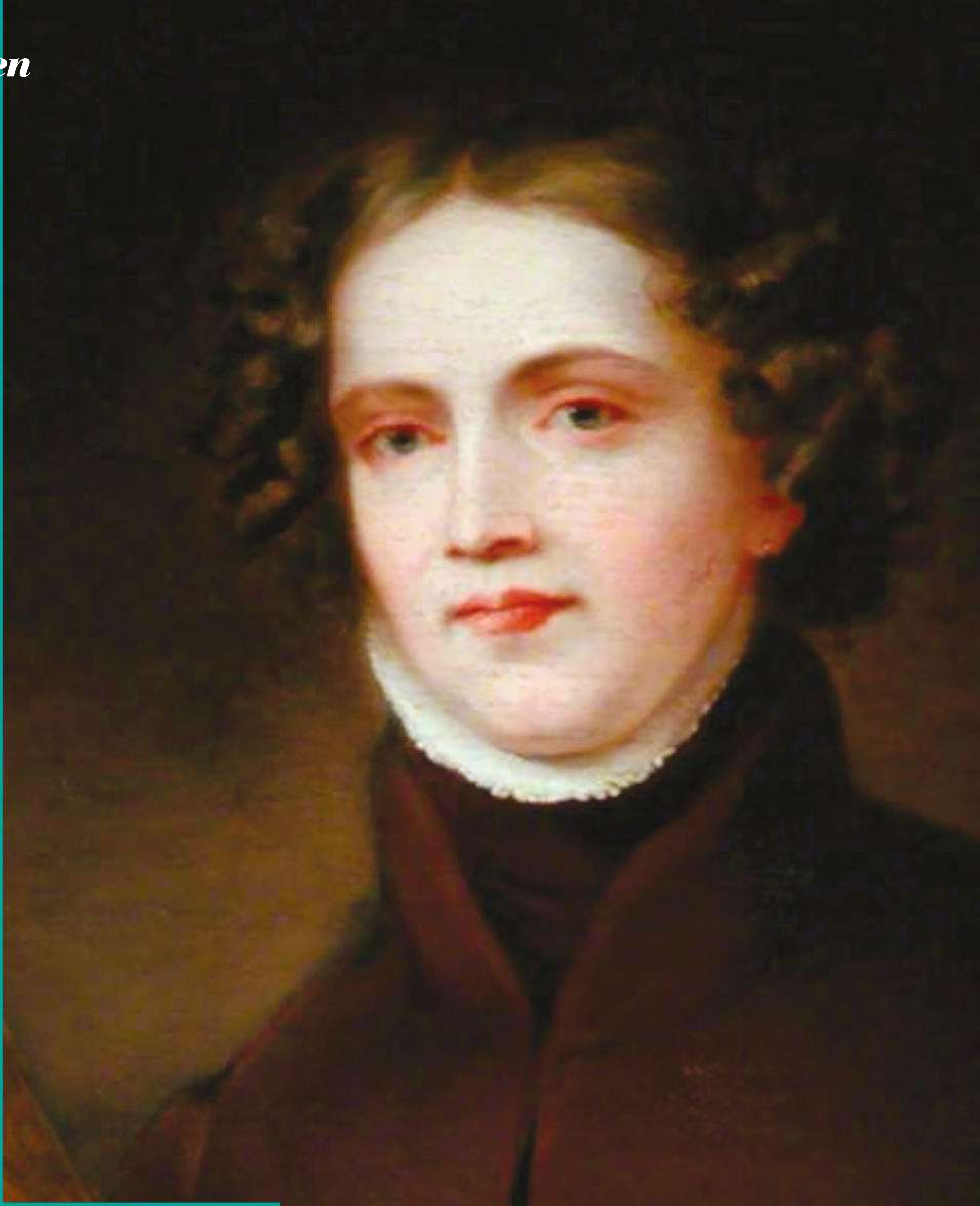
Anne Lister's Grave

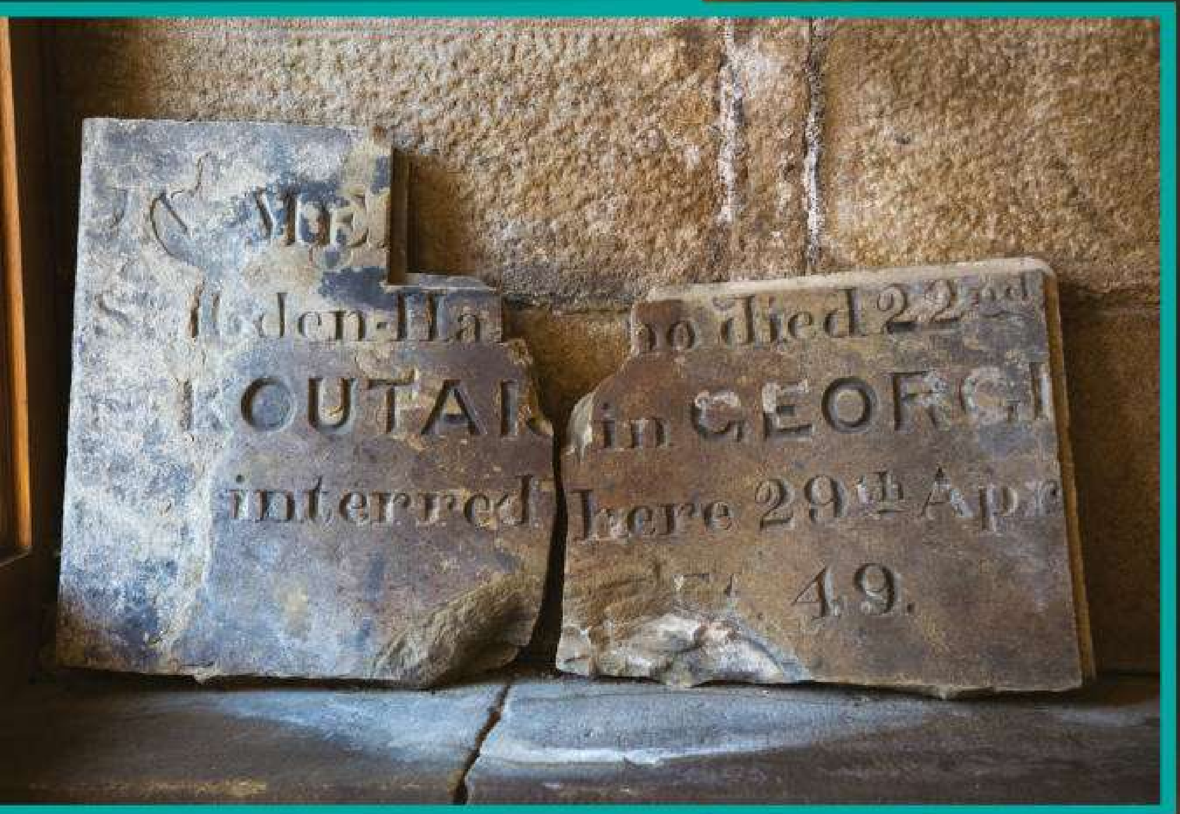
Years after it was lost, the grave of Gentleman Jack was rediscovered at last

Anne Lister was buried in Halifax Minster in West Yorkshire on 29 April 1841. Her tombstone was later covered by a floor in 1879 and lost. For well over a century the grave and tombstone were forgotten, and seemingly no mention was made of it in official church records.

That all changed in early 2000, when a number of Victorian pews were being removed during restoration work of the north east corner of the church. Only then were the incomplete, smashed remains of Lister's tombstone discovered, having been lost for 121 years. Why the stone was smashed is a mystery and the whereabouts of much of the stone remains unknown. Today the surviving pieces of the tombstone are cared for at Halifax Minster.

Sadly, the exact location of Anne Lister's grave also remains unknown. While the church maintains that she was buried in the family vault, others – including *Gentleman Jack* creator Sally Wainwright – believe that the discovery of the smashed tombstone suggests that Lister's grave lies elsewhere within the Minster. Whatever the truth, Anne's memory will live on, as her story continues to inspire.





LEFT A portrait of Anne Lister by Joshua Horner

TOP Anne Lister and Ann Walker made Shibden Hall their family home. They renovated and improved it, and turned it into a sanctuary

ABOVE Anne Lister's residence at Shibden Hall in Calderdale is open to the public, who flock there to get a look at the place she called home

All images: © Alamy

Raine, who shared her boarding school bedroom. Raine was the illegitimate daughter of a deceased surgeon for the East India Company, and she stood to inherit a fortune when she came of age. She dreamed of making a life with Lister after their school days, while Lister dreamed of the travels that Raine's money would buy, but their relationship was not to be. Lister began romancing other girls at the school and after just two years, she was asked to leave. The heartbroken Raine was left behind to nurse her hopes of one day being reunited with her first love, but Lister was in no mood to be tied down. She wanted to be free to see the world and take other lovers, whether Raine liked it or not. Tragically, Eliza Raine never got to fully explore her life either; she eventually ended her days in an asylum.

Lister wasn't sent to another school, but instead continued her education at home. She began to build a library in which to indulge her passion for classical literature, and wrote often to her aunt at Shibden. When she was 15 Lister began the first volume of her famed diaries, which eventually extended to thousands of pages that offered an unparalleled look into her trailblazing life. Well aware that society wouldn't understand her desires, she developed a secret code that she would employ whenever she wanted to write about her most intimate dreams and desires; it was a code that would take researchers years to break. Within the pages of her diaries, Lister could leave an account of her most private life, in a world that criminalised homosexuality and barely acknowledged the existence of lesbians at all. Yet though she concealed this most fundamental part of her character, she concealed little else. Lister joyfully rejected the accepted signifiers of Georgian femininity and began to dress in masculine clothes and undertake what were considered masculine pursuits.

> "ON EASTER SUNDAY IN 1834, ANNE LISTER AND ANN WALKER EXCHANGED RINGS AT THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH IN YORK"

When she was in her early twenties Lister fell in love with Marianne Belcombe, the daughter of a wealthy local doctor, and the women conducted a secret love affair in full view of their unsuspecting families. When they exchanged rings, the gesture was explained away by their friends and families as a gift between best friends. Yet Belcombe had no intention of making a life with Lister and in 1815, she married. Though Lister joined the couple on honeymoon, the loss of Belcombe broke her heart. She tried to occupy herself by starting an affair with Belcombe's sister instead, but the attraction between the two old flames was too strong to ignore. Lister and Belcombe began an affair that lasted for years, but it could never be more. Belcombe was desperate to be accepted as a model society wife and eventually she ended the relationship, embarrassed by her lover's masculine appearance and refusal to compromise on her lifestyle.

Lister loved to travel and made her first trip abroad in 1819, when she visited France. She made several further trips to Europe to explore and hike, eschewing the ladylike trips expected of her. Lister inherited Shibden Hall in 1826 with her uncle's death, but she shared control of its income with her aunt and her younger brother. Independent and strong-willed, Lister found travelling the perfect antidote to the stifling life she knew at Shibden Hall with her aunt. Nor did she travel in the way young ladies were expected to, undertaking dainty trips and spa visits; instead she hiked and wandered, scaling mountains and going where female travellers were little seen. It was expensive, but it gave her a freedom that she felt was denied to her at home.

By 1836, Lister's aunt and brother were dead and she finally took full control of the Shibden estate's income. Once she was in the driving seat, Lister was able to prove that she truly was a businesswoman to be reckoned with. With a portfolio that included shares in railways, canals, mines and quarries, as well as a number of properties, Anne Lister was now an independently wealthy woman. Her financial security allowed her to live as she pleased to a point and financed her travels across Europe. She also used her business income to renovate Shibden Hall,

Gentleman Jack

BBC/HBO's *Gentleman Jack* reinvigorated interest in Anne Lister around the world

When Sally Wainwright's *Gentleman Jack* debuted in 2019, it became an overnight sensation. The series, a co-production between the BBC and HBO, revealed Anne Lister's remarkable story to audiences across the globe, and found a passionate following that continues to this day. Though it was not the first televisual treatment of Anne Lister's story, it is certainly the most well-known. In the wake of *Gentleman Jack*, interest in Anne Lister and Ann Walker has reached new heights, and visitors flock to Halifax and Shibden Hall, eager to tread in the footsteps of their heroine.

Lister's story was also told in 2010 on BBC Two in *The Secret Diaries Of Miss Anne Lister*, and has inspired other drama and music, as well as numerous books and articles. However, despite *Gentleman Jack*'s popularity, after two series and 16 episodes, HBO withdrew their participation in the series. Though the BBC expressed an interest in continuing Lister's story, to date the series has not been renewed.

which was restored to its former glory and became her beloved home.

Yet Lister didn't just sit back and let other people run her businesses while she spent the profits. Instead, she took a hands-on approach to managing her portfolio of business interests and she proved to be a fearsome opponent to any who dared challenge her. Lister was a natural entrepreneur who instinctively understood the emerging world of industry that was there for the taking. She understood too the importance of the stable income her estate properties provided when it came to building a base for investments that might otherwise have proved too risky, and eventually she was even able – with an injection of capital provided by her lover, Ann Walker – to sink her own pits. For a woman, such things were unheard of.

Ann Walker, whose money was to prove so vital to helping Anne Lister's business expansion, was the shy daughter of a neighbouring estate, whom Anne Lister had known for years. However, the timid Walker had made little impact on her more

Ann Walker
of Cliffe Hill
(1803 - 1854)
was buried under the pulpit.

LEFT Though *Gentleman Jack* is the most well-known adaptation of Lister's story, the BBC also produced *The Secret Diaries Of Miss Anne Lister* in 2010

BELOW-LEFT The grave of Ann Walker, the wife of Lister

All images: © Alamy

forthright neighbour until they met again as women. This time, Anne Lister found her neighbour irresistible, her attraction made all the more acute by the fortune that Walker stood to inherit. Ann Walker was not Anne Lister's first love, and Lister had enjoyed a string of clandestine affairs both at home and abroad. She had even hoped to marry Vere Hobart, sister of the 5th Earl of Buckinghamshire, but after a whirlwind trip to France Vere instead married a man. This time, however, Lister had met a woman who was all too willing to return her feelings.

Just before she began her relationship with Lister, Ann Walker's fiancé had died, and she was in need of affection and comfort. Anne Lister provided it, and the two women fell quickly in love. However, when Lister invited her lover to live at Shibden with her, Walker demurred. She was all too aware of how their relationship would be perceived, and asked if she could have some time to consider the invitation. Lister took herself off to Europe and, during her absence, Ann Walker attracted the attention of a male suitor.

The attention of that male suitor convinced Walker that she already had what she wanted; she rejected his advances and, when Anne Lister returned from her travels, the two women established their household at Shibden Hall. They were ready to make a commitment, whether it was recognised or not, and they undertook what has since become recognised as the first lesbian marriage in the United Kingdom. Today, their union is commemorated with a plaque at the church.

On Easter Sunday in 1834, Anne Lister and Ann Walker took communion together at the Holy Trinity Church in Goodramgate, York, and exchanged rings. Always the subject of gossip and the target of cruel comments, Anne Lister had long since learned to ignore the catcalls that she attracted, but news of the shared communion brought with it a new wave of cruelty. Anonymous letters mocking the marriage arrived at Shibden Hall and someone even paid to place an advertisement in *The Leeds Mercury* that publicly rubbished the marriage of Captain Tom Lister and Ann Walker. In a demonstration of their extraordinary strength, the two women faced their critics head on. Rather than hide away and try to pretend that they were nothing but friends, they went away on their honeymoon, which they spent in France and Switzerland.

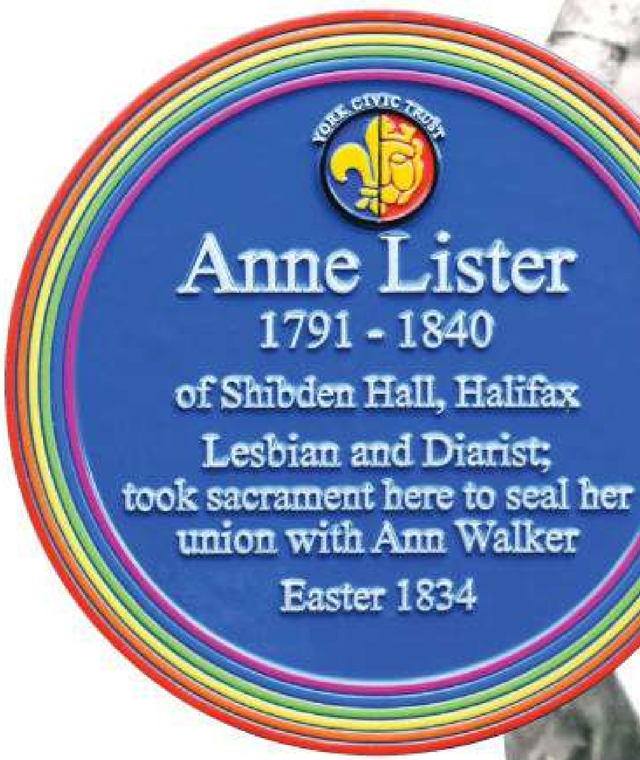
For the rest of Lister's life, she and her beloved wife lived happily together at Shibden Hall. Ann Walker's fortune and Anne Lister's income and business interests made them a formidable couple, who were able to live independently, safe from the meddling of families. Once unloved and falling into disrepair, Shibden was now the centre of their home life and its picturesque lake and waterfall were restored to former glories, while Lister designed and project-managed a number of renovations. She had long since been building and nurturing a richly appointed library and now she was able to give it the home it deserved, in a newly constructed Gothic Tower that was added to Shibden Hall in 1838.

> "ANNE LISTER WAS DEDICATED, SINGLE-MINDED AND DETERMINED, A SINGULAR WOMAN OF EXTRAORDINARY INTELLIGENCE AND WILL"

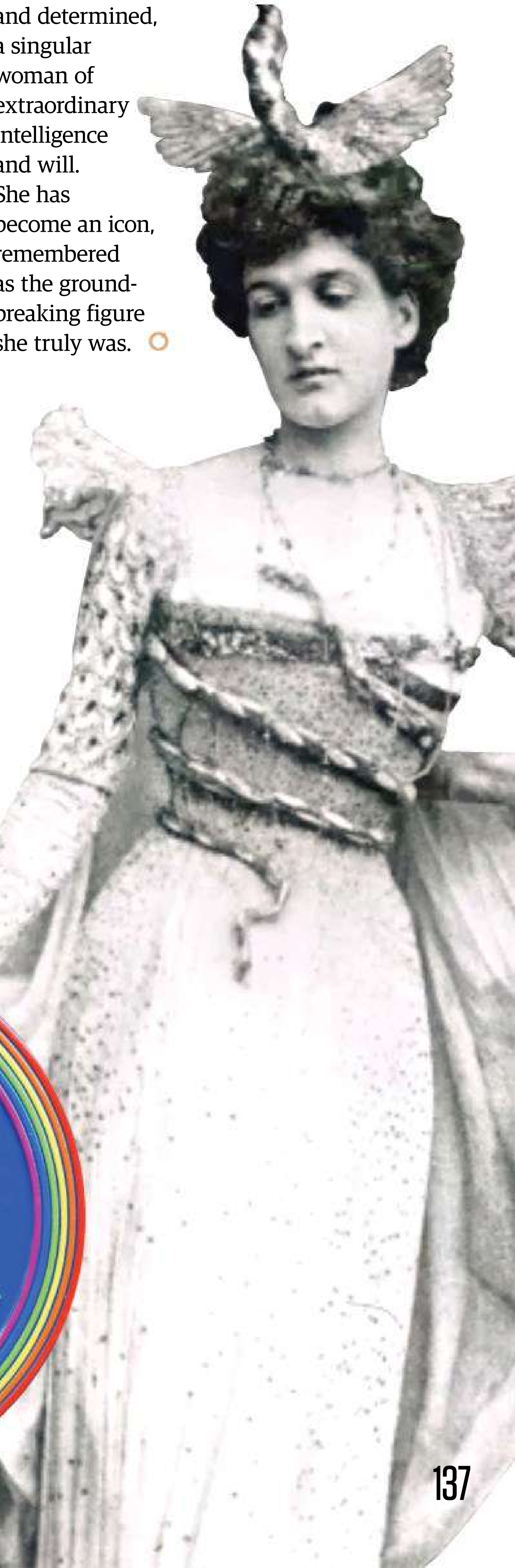
Anne Lister and Ann Walker took their final trip together in 1839, when they undertook an ambitious tour through France, Denmark and Sweden, before reaching Russia at the freezing height of a brutal winter. Ann Walker was keen to turn back rather than journey on through what was virtually uncharted territory, but her wife convinced her that they should continue with their journey. As they travelled on through regions that sometimes saw them joined by a military escort, Anne Lister suffered an insect bite that turned septic. She died of fever on 22 September 1840 at Kutaisi in Georgia.

Broken by grief, Ann Walker returned to England and the echoing rooms of Shibden Hall, which Lister had willed to her. As Anne Lister's body was laid to rest in Halifax Minster, her wife locked the doors of Shibden and sank into depression. When the concerned Walker family finally had the doors broken down they found the house in chaos and a despairing Ann with a loaded pistol at her side. Ann Walker joined Eliza Raine in the asylum. Ironically, they were both under the care of the father of Marianne Belcombe.

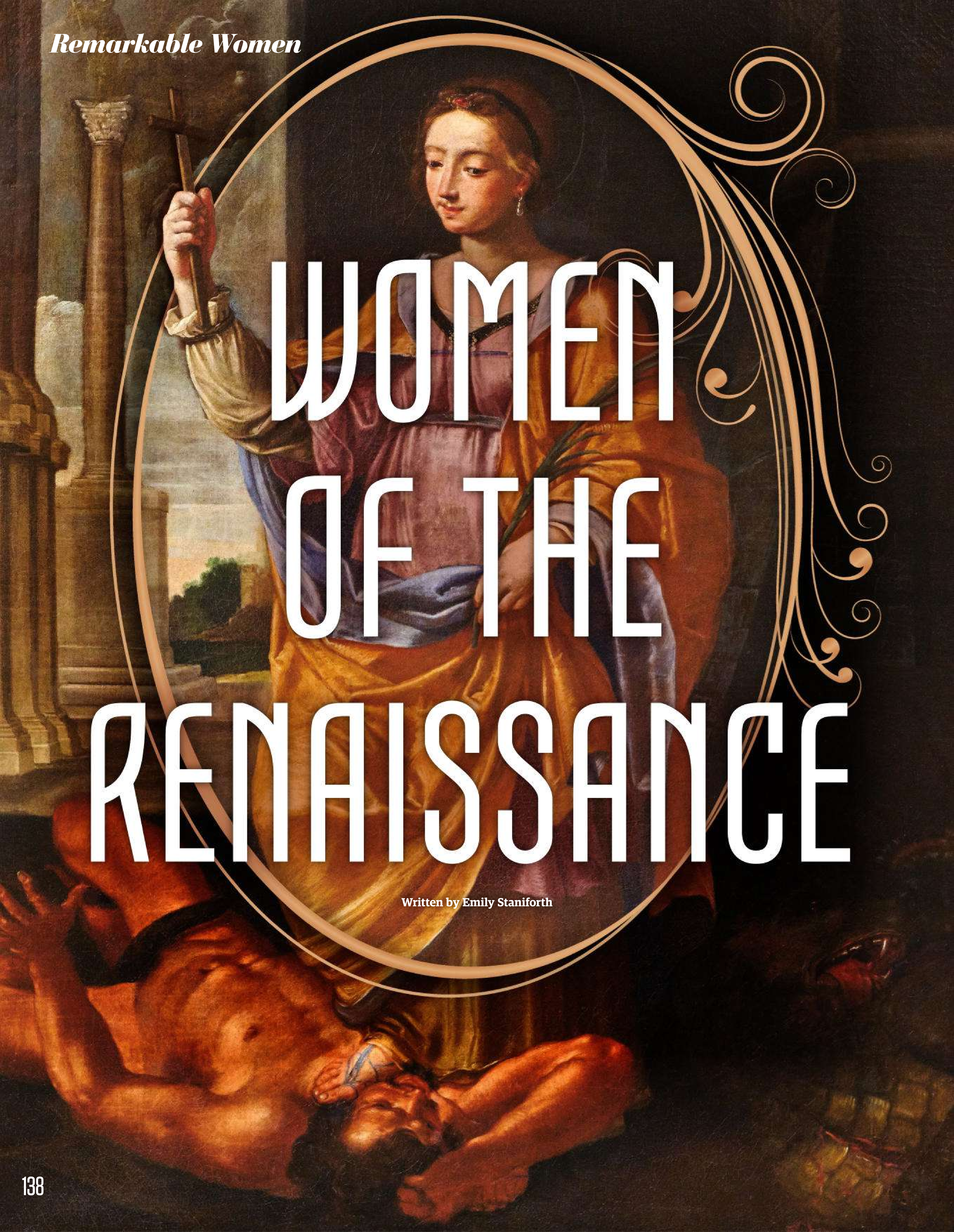
The rediscovery and decoding of Anne Lister's diaries, as well as the celebrated *Gentleman Jack*, has allowed modern audiences to discover the true story of a woman who truly blazed her own trail. Anne Lister was dedicated, single-minded and determined, a singular woman of extraordinary intelligence and will. She has become an icon, remembered as the ground-breaking figure she truly was. ○



RIGHT This rainbow plaque memorialises Anne Lister's marriage to Ann Walker at Holy Trinity Church



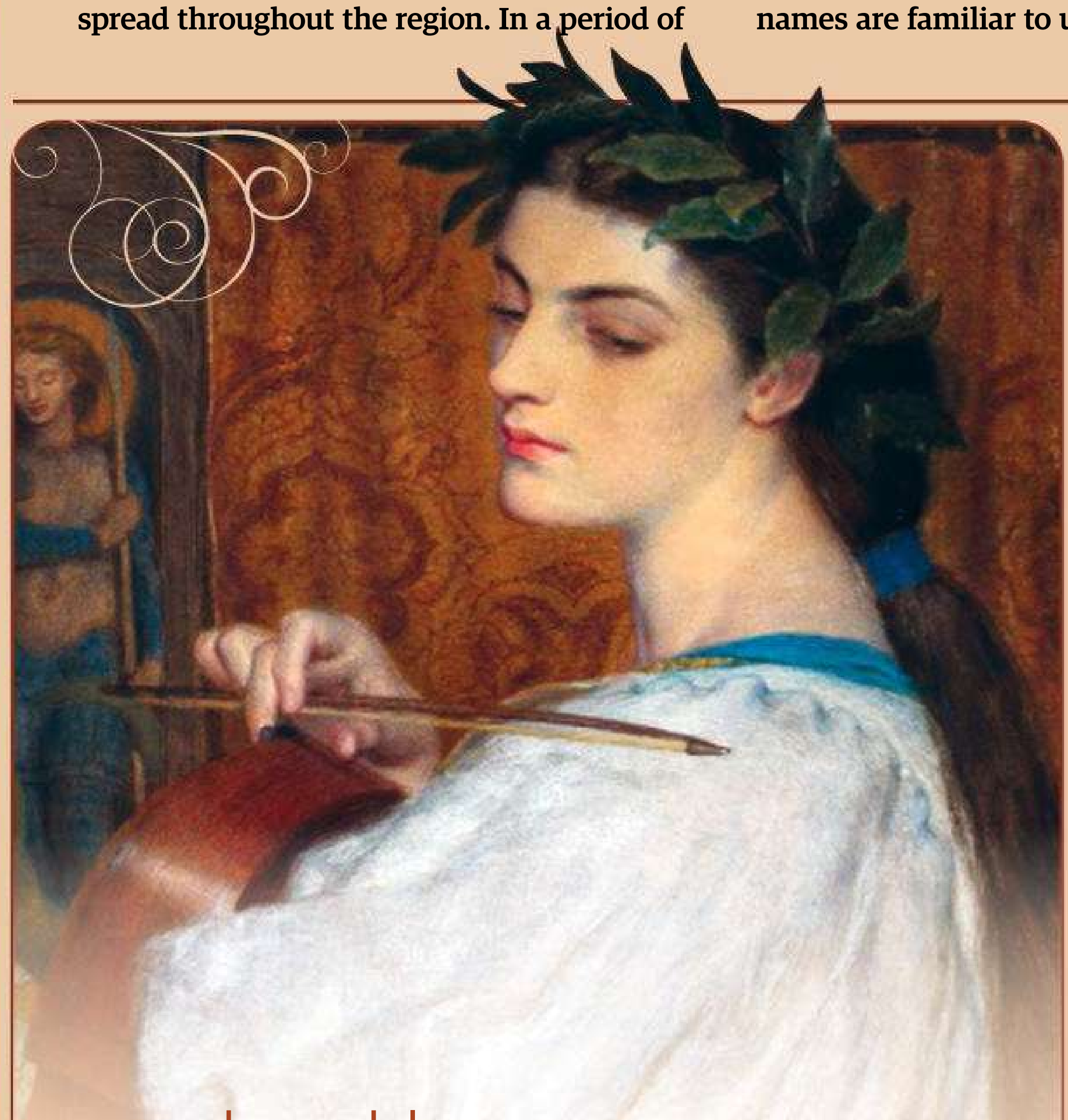
FAR-RIGHT Anne Lister lived by her own rules. Businesswoman, traveller and lesbian, she was determined to succeed



WOMEN OF THE RENAISSANCE

Written by Emily Staniforth

From the 14th to the 17th century, the city-states that now make up Italy underwent a cultural transformation. As the Middle Ages drew to a close, a 'rebirth' or 'renaissance' of art, politics, economics and philosophy emerged from the Republic of Florence and began to spread throughout the region. In a period of rediscovering the classical culture of Ancient Greece and Rome, some of the greatest artists, intellectuals and inventors like Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Niccolò Machiavelli to name but a few dominated the cultural landscape and made their mark on the history of society and art. While these names are familiar to us, there was also a small but significant group of women who defied the expectations of their time and participated in arts and literary activities to contribute to the cultural revolution. Here are just a few of those remarkable women who may have been forgotten but deserve to be remembered for the significant role they played during the Renaissance.



Cassandra Fedele *Writer and poet, 1465 – 1558*

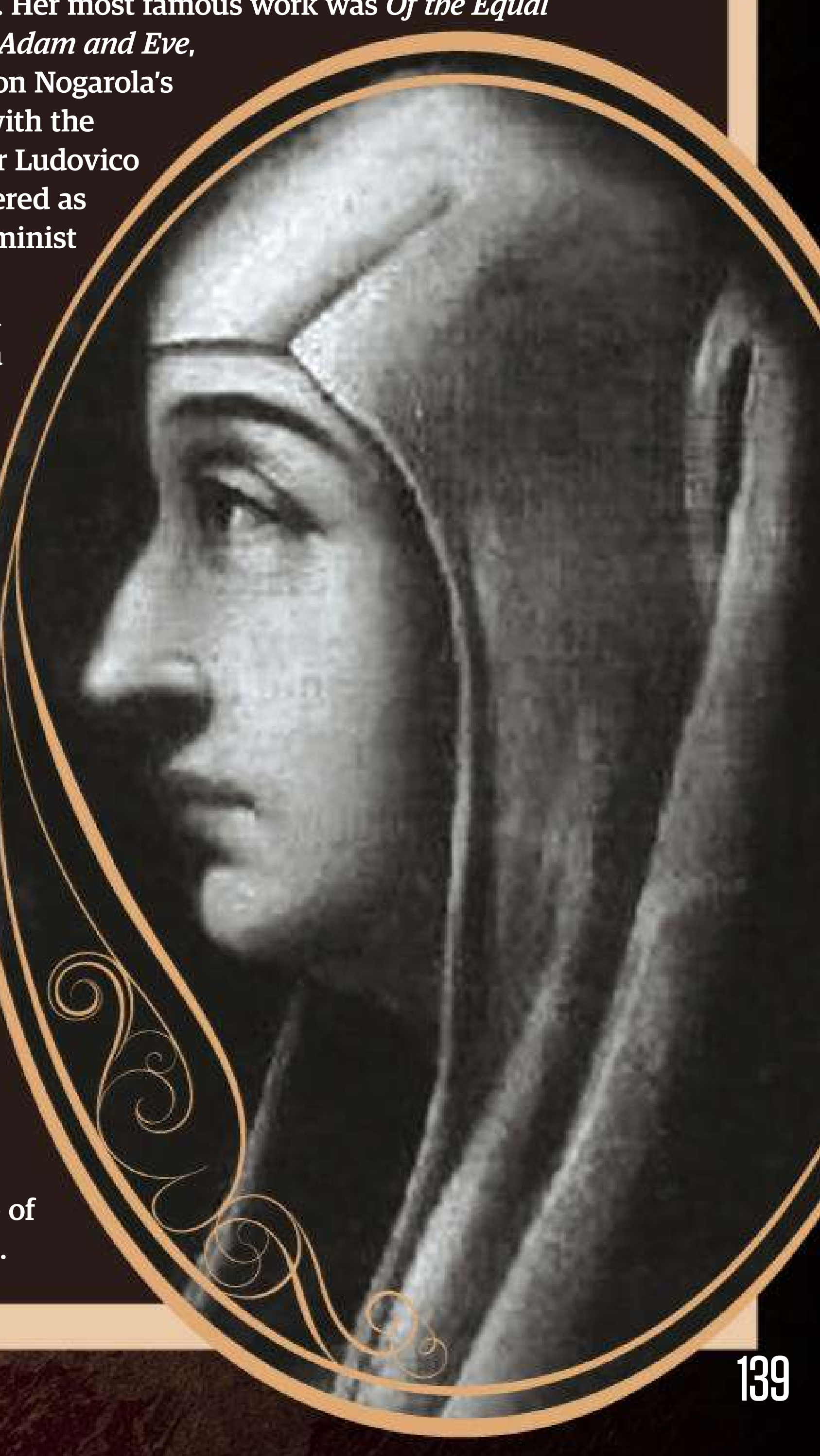
Along with Isotta Nogarola, Cassandra Fedele was one of the most prominent female humanists of the Italian Renaissance. Born in Venice, there is very little known about Fedele's family. Her father ensured that Fedele received a classical education and she was tutored in both Greek and Latin by the friar Gasparino Borro. With a talent for writing and public speaking, Fedele gave a speech at the University of Padua in 1487 that caught the attention of notable Italian scholars. From then on, Fedele corresponded with humanists from across Italy and wrote both scholarly work and poetry. Unfortunately, very little of Fedele's work survives.

An offer from the future Queen of Spain, Isabella of Castile, to join her court is a testament to Fedele's fame, success and popularity. Fedele turned Isabella down, with some historians believing that the Doge of Venice would not have let the writer leave as she was an asset to the city. Unlike Christine de Pizan, Fedele did not appear to believe she could commit to a marriage and continue in her studies. Her scholarly activity seems to have ceased upon her marriage in 1499, and she very quickly disappeared from the humanist scene. However, in 1520, after her husband had died, Fedele wrote to Pope Paul III asking for help and was made the prioress of an orphanage in Venice. There is little evidence to suggest that Fedele continued her academic pursuits in private, but in 1556 she gave a rare speech in honour of the visiting queen of Poland. It is possible that she wrote poetry and a book called *The Order of the Sciences*, but none of this work has survived.

Isotta Nogarola *Writer, 1418-66*

As the humanism movement took hold across Italy, having originated in Florence, writers and intellectuals as well as the nobility began to educate themselves, their families and their pupils in the humanist fashion. In Verona, Isotta Nogarola was provided with a humanist education by her wealthy parents. Though it was still unusual to educate girls, Nogarola's mother insisted that all her children be given an education. Nogarola's aunt, Angela Nogarola, was a poet with humanist connections that gave the young girl access to some of the greatest minds of the Renaissance. As a teenager, Nogarola began to correspond with prominent humanists, with whom she swapped books and letters.

Despite attacks on Nogarola, which came in the form of anonymous letters accusing her of incest and 'wantonness' now believed to have been sent by men who did not think women should be able to express their intellectual opinions, she continued to write profusely. Her most famous work was *Of the Equal or Unequal Sin of Adam and Eve*, a dialogue based on Nogarola's correspondence with the Venetian governor Ludovico Foscarini. Considered as one of the first feminist reassessments of the story of Adam and Eve, Nogarola posited that Eve was not to blame for the expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Nogarola spent her life dedicated to her writing and, unusually for a woman of the time, never married or joined a nunnery. She was admired by her fellow humanists and is considered as the first female figure of Italian humanism.



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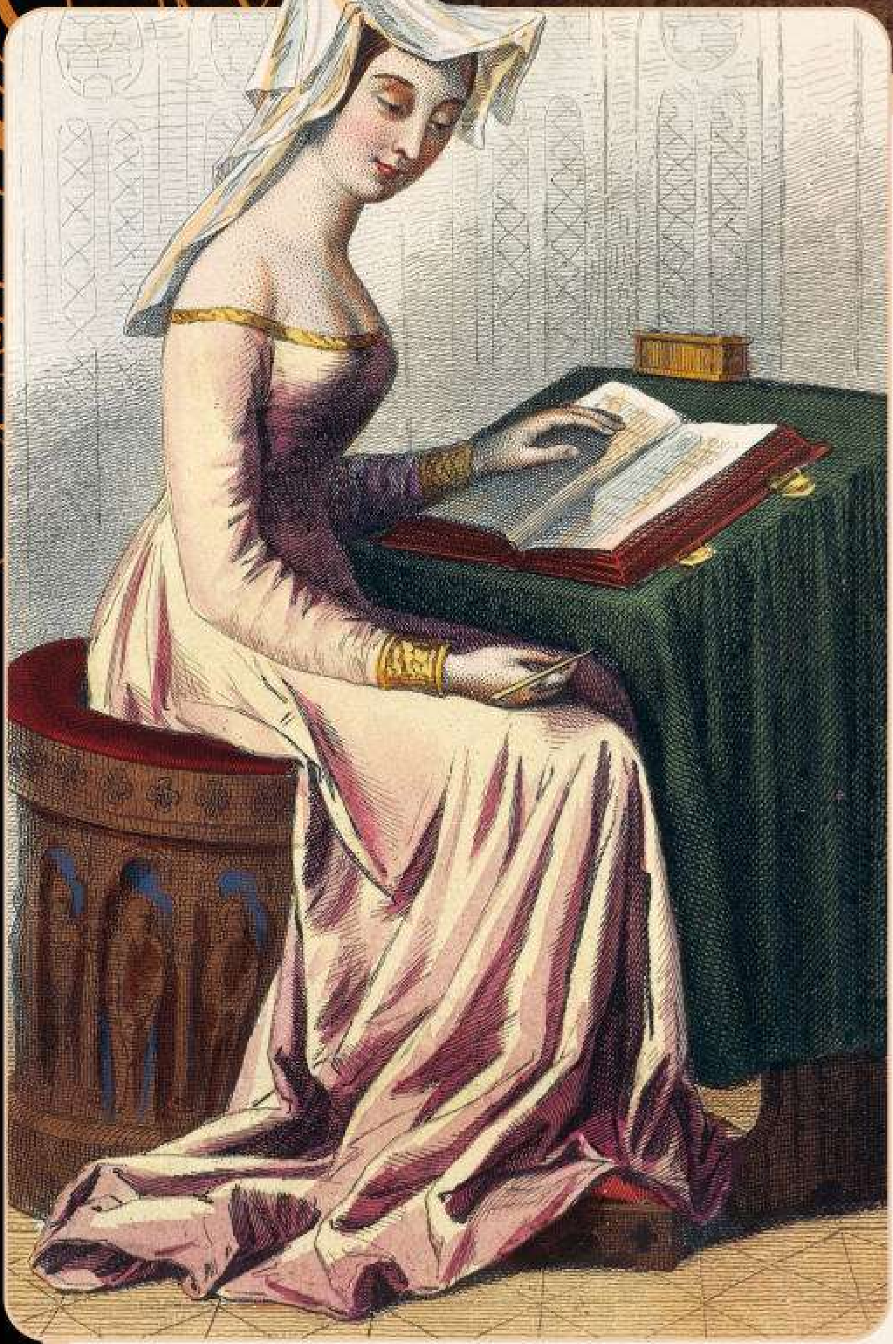


Christine de Pizan **Writer and poet,** 1364 – c.1430

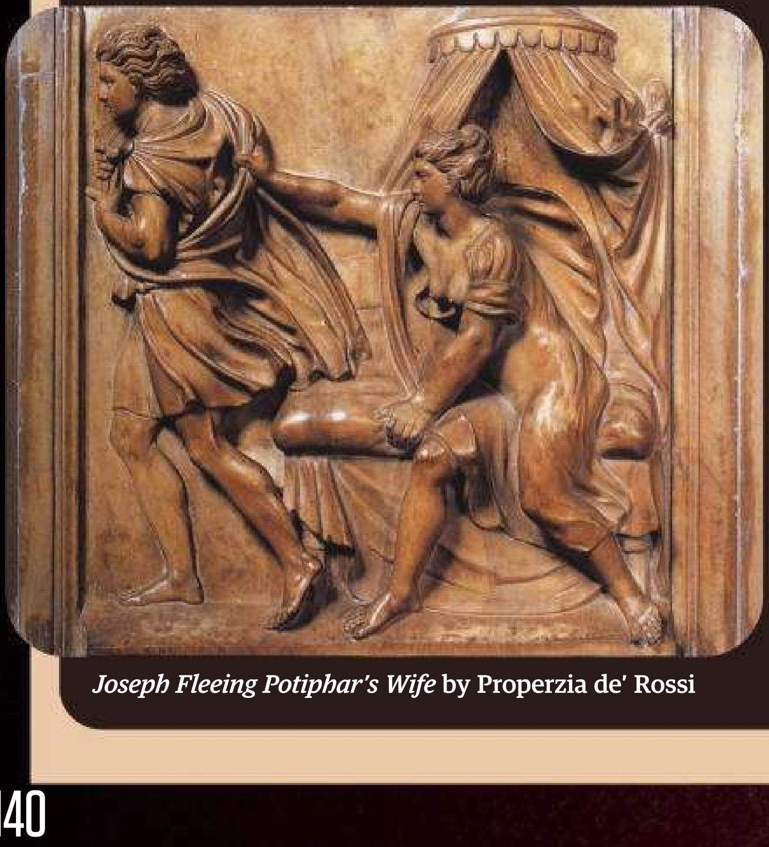
Christine de Pizan was born in Venice at the very beginning of the Renaissance. Though she moved away from Italy at a young age – her family relocated to Paris due to her father's position as the astrologer to King Charles V – de Pizan's work as a writer and poet secured her a place in history as the first female humanist. The humanist movement advocated for an interest and education in the classical works of Ancient Greece and Rome with an emphasis on studying and understanding human nature. One of the earliest proponents of Renaissance humanism was Petrarch who, like de Pizan, wrote during the early Renaissance.

After the premature deaths of her father and husband, de Pizan was left to take care of her family. During her childhood, her father had ensured she had access to the best education and so de Pizan used her skills and began to write, becoming the first European woman to earn a living from writing. Her work, which drew on literature from antiquity, largely centred on feminist issues and discussed life in a patriarchal society, the lack of equality and education for women, and the achievements of women. Her writing also sometimes discussed thoughts on a fair world for both sexes. Surprisingly, despite mostly focussing on women, her work was popular with the upper classes of France and she made a comfortable living. As well as her feminist treatises, the most famous of which is *The Book of the City of Ladies*, de Pizan wrote poetry, letters and verses and boasted elite patrons like Queen Isabella of Bavaria, the 4th Earl of Salisbury and Duke Philip of Burgundy. She was commissioned by the latter to write a biography of his brother Charles V. De Pizan was an example to Renaissance women, showing them that they could make their own way in a male-dominated world. As a pioneer for both women and writers of the time, her work is still studied by scholars.

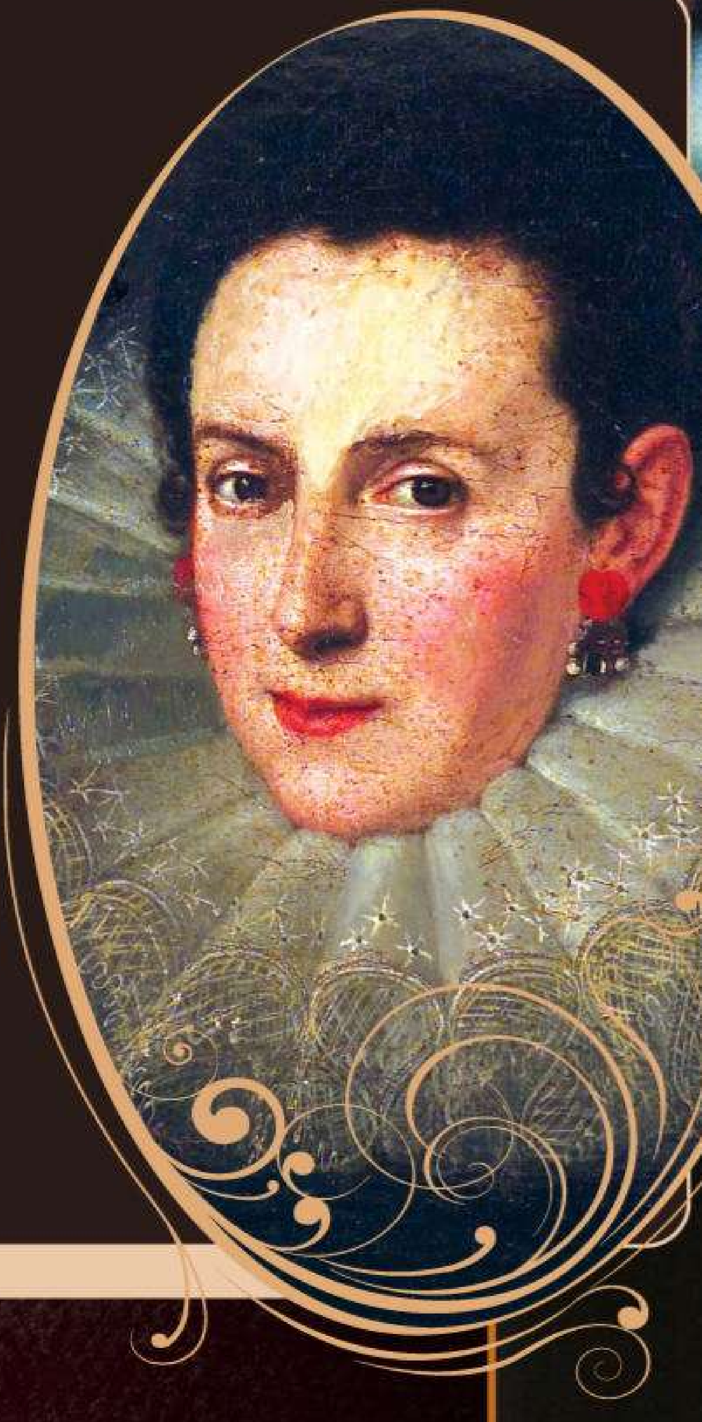
Properzia de' Rossi **Sculptor,** c.1490 – 1530

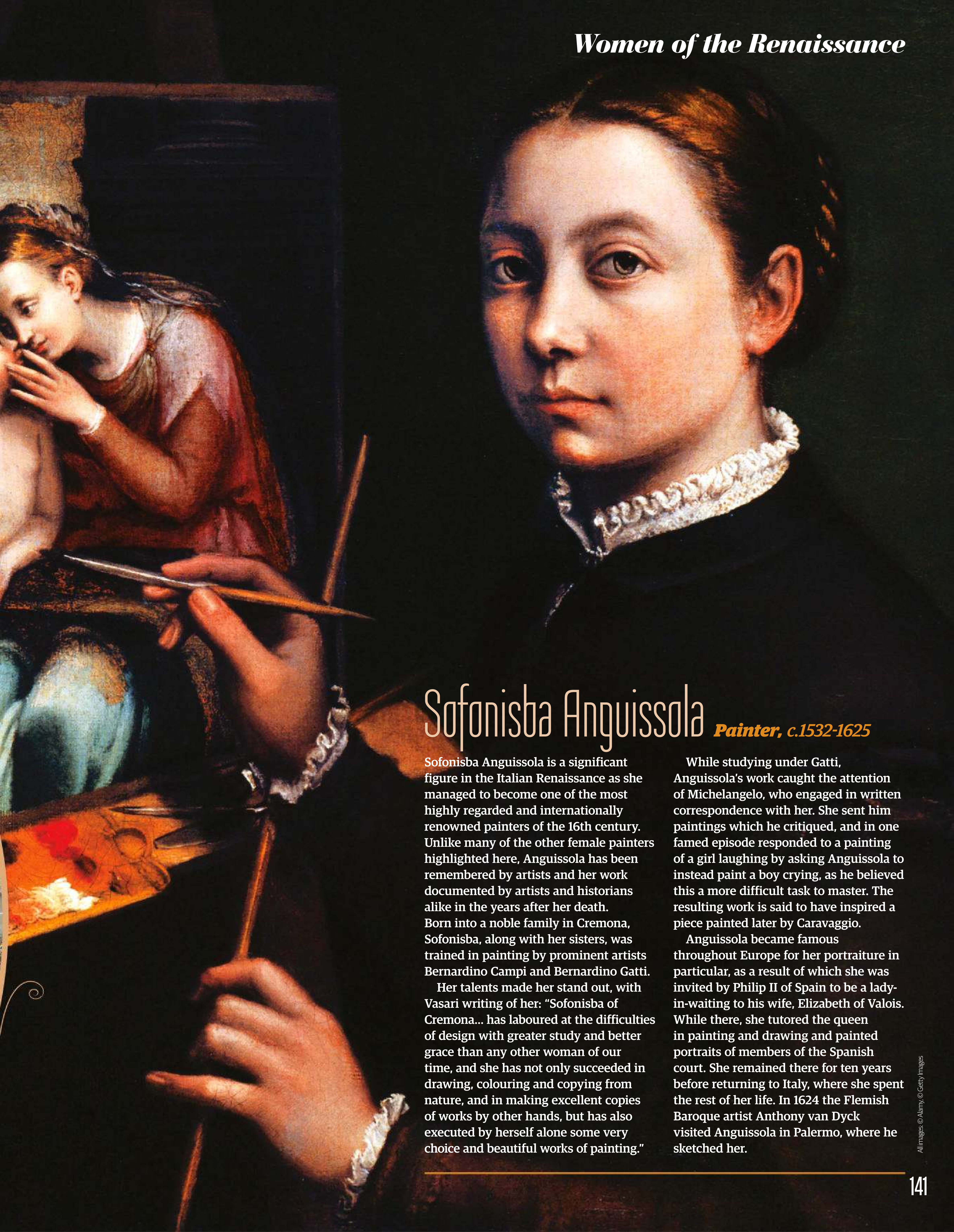
When looking at prominent female artists of the Renaissance, one woman in particular stands out. As the first woman featured in Giorgio Vasari's publication *The Lives of the Artists*, Properzia de' Rossi must have made a huge impression on the artist who has been styled by art historians as the 'Father of Art'. Born in Bologna, de' Rossi was unusual for a female artist in that she did not come from an artistic family: she was not trained by her family members like so many of the women who managed to become successful artists in their own right. Though little is known about her life, it is believed that de' Rossi was trained by Marcantonio Raimondi, an Italian engraver.

At the beginning of her career, de' Rossi made her engravings into the stones and pits of different fruits, presumably because her humble background meant she had limited access to expensive materials. Although her initial materials were not ideal for sculpting, the intricacies she achieved in her work, particularly on such tiny objects, was remarkable. Vasari wrote of her work: "And it was certainly a miracle to see on so small a thing as a peach-stone the whole Passion of Christ, wrought in the most beautiful carving, with a vast number of figures in addition to the Apostles and the ministers of the Crucifixion." Later in her career, de' Rossi worked as a sculptor on Bologna's Basilica of San Petronio. She also carved a family crest for the distinguished Grassi family. At the end of her life, her work had brought her to the attention of Pope Clement VII, who requested to meet her. However, de' Rossi died before the meeting could take place.



Joseph Fleeing Potiphar's Wife by Properzia de' Rossi





Sofonisba Anguissola

Painter, *c.1532-1625*

Sofonisba Anguissola is a significant figure in the Italian Renaissance as she managed to become one of the most highly regarded and internationally renowned painters of the 16th century. Unlike many of the other female painters highlighted here, Anguissola has been remembered by artists and her work documented by artists and historians alike in the years after her death.

Born into a noble family in Cremona, Sofonisba, along with her sisters, was trained in painting by prominent artists Bernardino Campi and Bernardino Gatti.

Her talents made her stand out, with Vasari writing of her: "Sofonisba of Cremona... has laboured at the difficulties of design with greater study and better grace than any other woman of our time, and she has not only succeeded in drawing, colouring and copying from nature, and in making excellent copies of works by other hands, but has also executed by herself alone some very choice and beautiful works of painting."

While studying under Gatti, Anguissola's work caught the attention of Michelangelo, who engaged in written correspondence with her. She sent him paintings which he critiqued, and in one famed episode responded to a painting of a girl laughing by asking Anguissola to instead paint a boy crying, as he believed this a more difficult task to master. The resulting work is said to have inspired a piece painted later by Caravaggio.

Anguissola became famous throughout Europe for her portraiture in particular, as a result of which she was invited by Philip II of Spain to be a lady-in-waiting to his wife, Elizabeth of Valois. While there, she tutored the queen in painting and drawing and painted portraits of members of the Spanish court. She remained there for ten years before returning to Italy, where she spent the rest of her life. In 1624 the Flemish Baroque artist Anthony van Dyck visited Anguissola in Palermo, where he sketched her.

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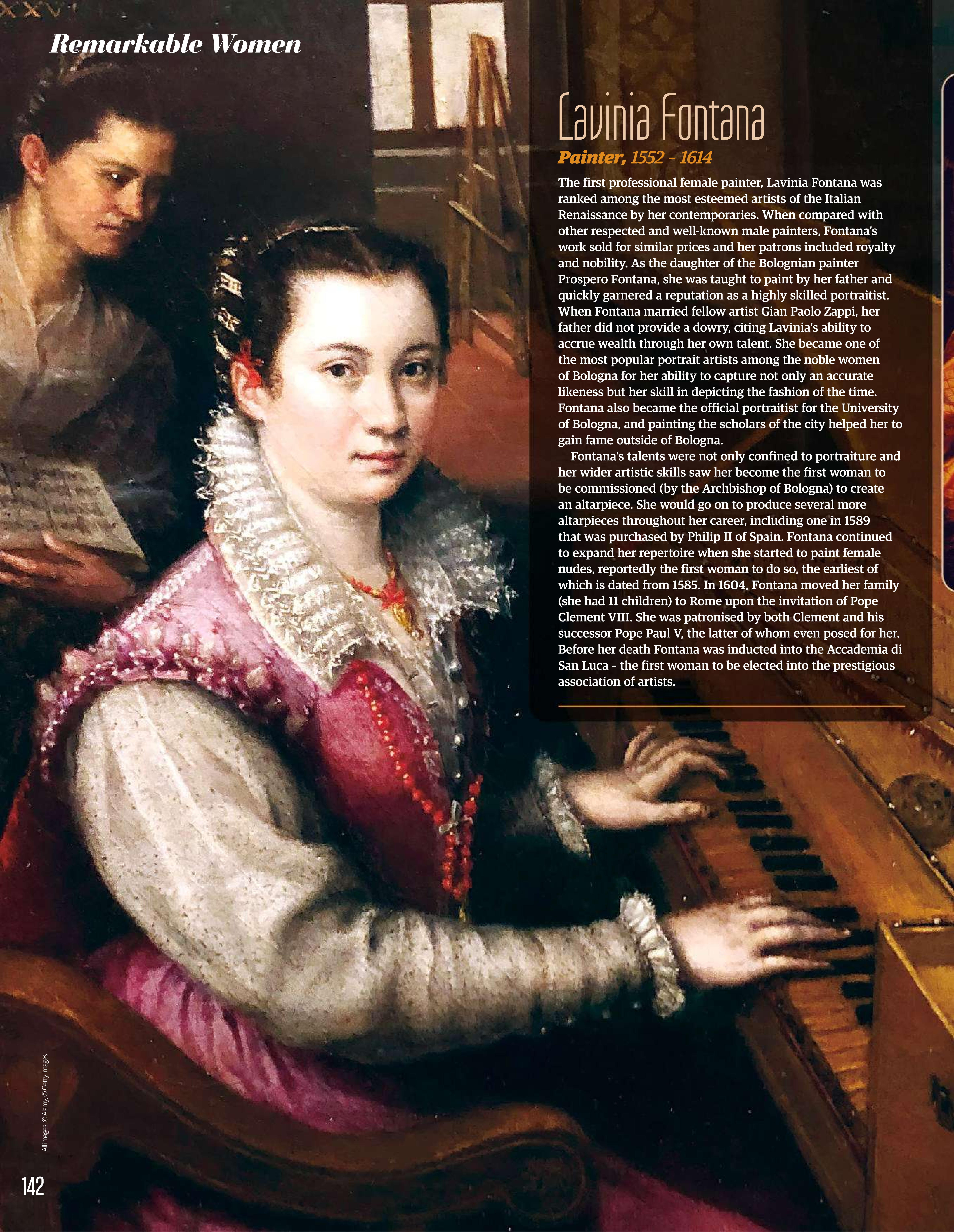

Lavinia Fontana

Painter, *1552 - 1614*

The first professional female painter, Lavinia Fontana was ranked among the most esteemed artists of the Italian Renaissance by her contemporaries. When compared with other respected and well-known male painters, Fontana's work sold for similar prices and her patrons included royalty and nobility. As the daughter of the Bolognian painter Prospero Fontana, she was taught to paint by her father and quickly garnered a reputation as a highly skilled portraitist. When Fontana married fellow artist Gian Paolo Zappi, her father did not provide a dowry, citing Lavinia's ability to accrue wealth through her own talent. She became one of the most popular portrait artists among the noble women of Bologna for her ability to capture not only an accurate likeness but her skill in depicting the fashion of the time. Fontana also became the official portraitist for the University of Bologna, and painting the scholars of the city helped her to gain fame outside of Bologna.

Fontana's talents were not only confined to portraiture and her wider artistic skills saw her become the first woman to be commissioned (by the Archbishop of Bologna) to create an altarpiece. She would go on to produce several more altarpieces throughout her career, including one in 1589 that was purchased by Philip II of Spain. Fontana continued to expand her repertoire when she started to paint female nudes, reportedly the first woman to do so, the earliest of which is dated from 1585. In 1604, Fontana moved her family (she had 11 children) to Rome upon the invitation of Pope Clement VIII. She was patronised by both Clement and his successor Pope Paul V, the latter of whom even posed for her. Before her death Fontana was inducted into the Accademia di San Luca - the first woman to be elected into the prestigious association of artists.

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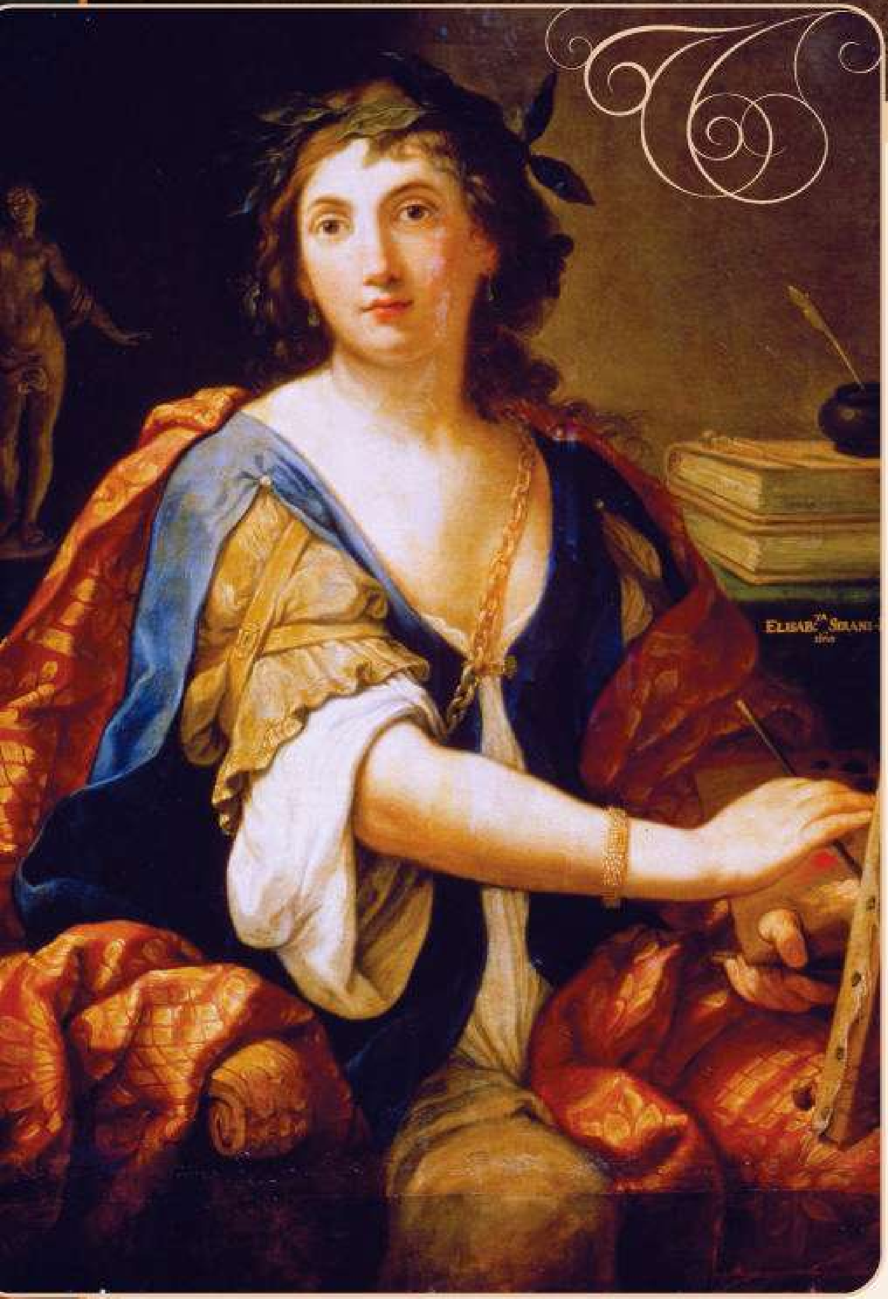
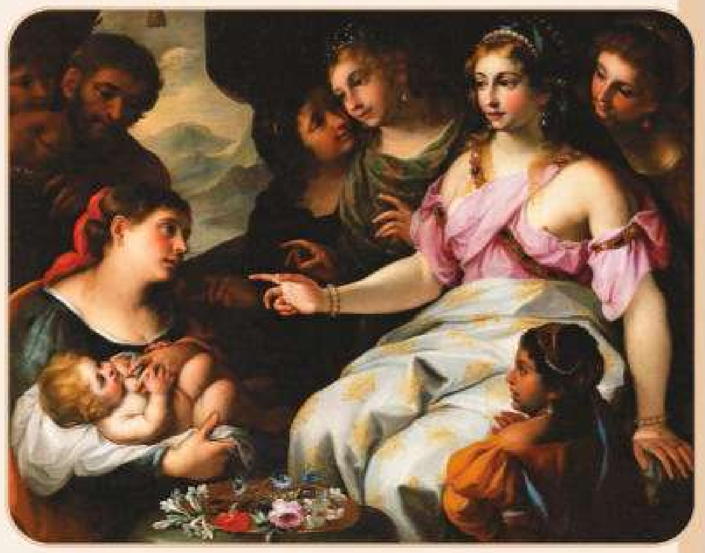


Elisabetta Sirani **Painter, 1638-65**

At the age of 19, Elisabetta Sirani headed up a workshop in her hometown of Bologna. She had been the apprentice of her father, the artist Giovanni Andrea Sirani, during her childhood and when her father was no longer able to paint she had taken over the running of his workshop in order to provide for her family. A successful painter in her own right, Sirani became well-known for her ability to work at speed, with members of the public often visiting the workshop to watch her paint. Her work often depicted religious scenes and was purchased by the elite of Europe, with her patrons including Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici and the King of Poland.

Sirani never left Bologna, although that did not hinder her in making her name as an artist, and she set up an art academy to tutor the young women of Bologna in drawing and painting. This centre was the first school of art exclusively for European women that was not a convent. Her efforts to bring art to the women of Italy did not go unnoticed, and when she died suddenly at the age of 27 there was a public outpouring of grief. At the time of her death there were suspicions that Sirani had been murdered, as the coroner recorded that her demise was a result of corrosive poisoning. One of Sirani's maids was even put on trial, though the charges were later withdrawn. Historians now believe Sirani probably died of peritonitis (abdominal infection). The people of Bologna gave her a funeral fit for a noblewoman.

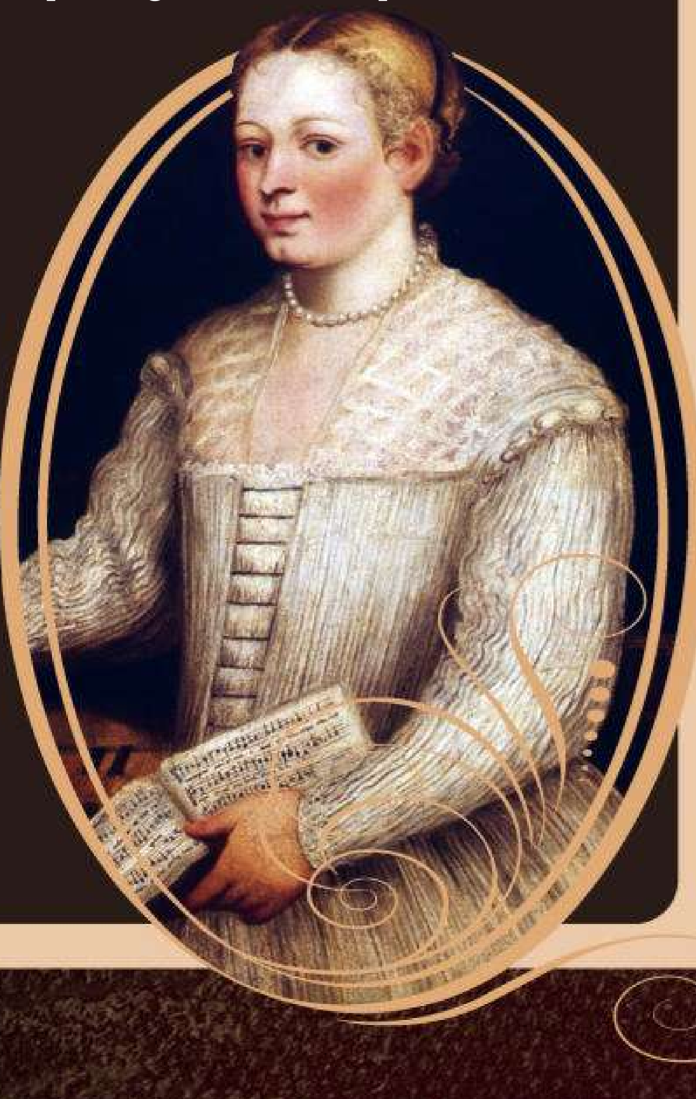


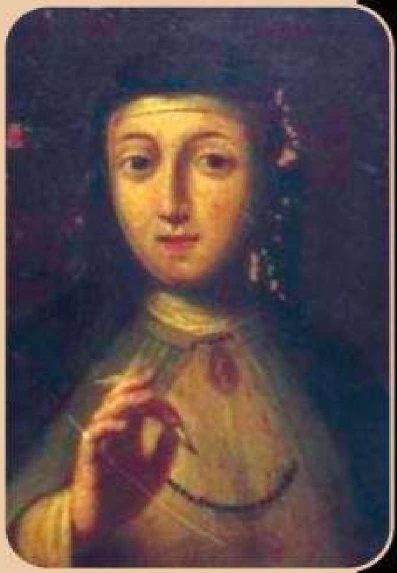
The Finding of Moses by Elisabetta Sirani

Marietta 'la Tintoretta' Robusti **Painter, c.1560-90**

As the daughter of one of Venice's most admired painters, Marietta Robusti had access to the tutelage of a Renaissance master. Tintoretto taught his eldest daughter to paint, according to her biographer Carlo Ridolfi, and she came to be a skilled portrait artist. Sometimes known as 'la Tintoretta', the female version of her father's nickname, which came from his father's profession as a cloth dyer (or tintore), and sometimes as 'buona ritrattista', meaning 'good portrait painter', Robusti painted many Venetian portraits. However, as Robusti painted in her father's workshop and rarely signed her name to paintings, it has been difficult for art historians to attribute works to her in any certainty.

Though we only have a few of Robusti's works to analyse, Ridolfi's 17th century biography provides us with an insight into her success during her own lifetime. Ridolfi claims that one of the most important portraits painted by Robusti was of Jacopo Strada, a relation of Emperor Maximilian. As a result of this portrait, her work was brought to the attention of the royal families of Europe and she was invited to join the courts of the Emperor and later Philip II of Spain. However, her father forbade her from going and she spent the rest of her life painting in his workshop.





Plautilla Nelli **Painter and nun, 1524-88**

Pulisena Margherita Nelli was born in Florence and was sent by her parents to a convent as a teenager. When she entered the Dominican convent of Santa Caterina di Cafaggio, Nelli changed her name to Sister Plautilla and it was expected that she would spend the rest of her life in religious devotion. However, Sister Plautilla had other plans. Despite being committed to a holy life, she pursued her interest in art and taught herself how to paint. It is believed that she inherited some of the works of the Renaissance painter Fra Bartolomeo and studying these helped her to perfect her technique and style.

Nelli, who is credited as Florence's first female artist, sold her paintings throughout the city. In *The Lives of the Artists*, Vasari wrote: "There were so many of her paintings in the houses of gentlemen in Florence, it would be tedious to mention them all." At the convent, Nelli formed a workshop consisting of her fellow nuns, whom she tutored and worked alongside. Together, they produced artwork that they sold to raise funds for the convent. Nelli was head of the convent three times, and led the nunnery not only as a spiritual centre but also as an artistic hub for female artists. Though she was largely forgotten by history, an effort to showcase her works in recent years has led to an increased interest in her.

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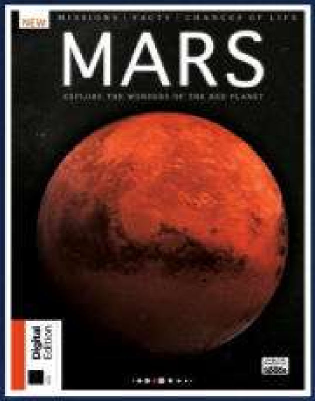

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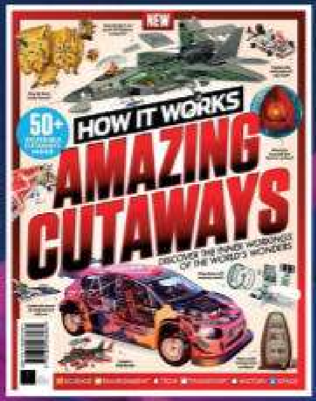
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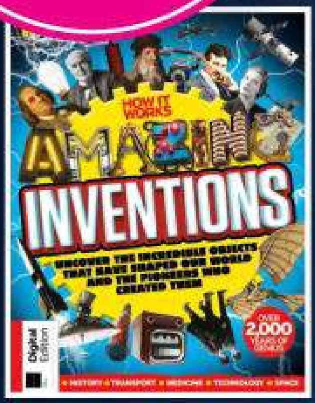
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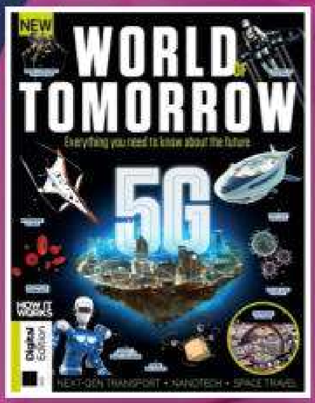
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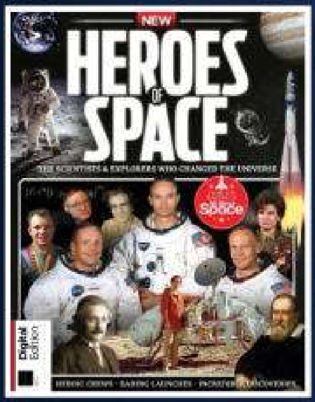
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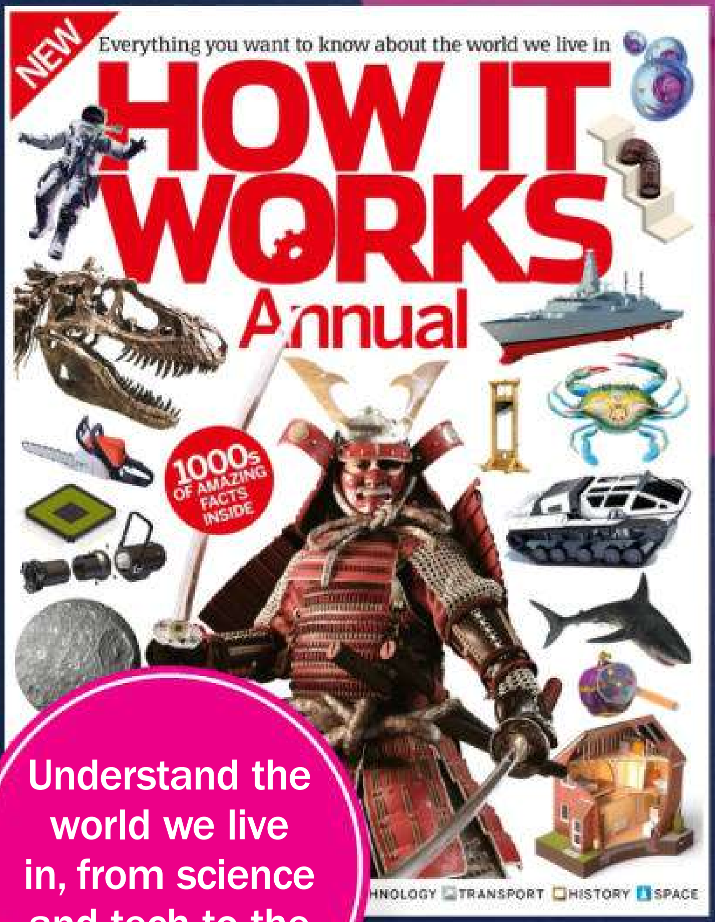
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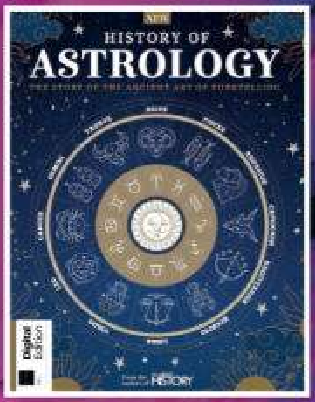
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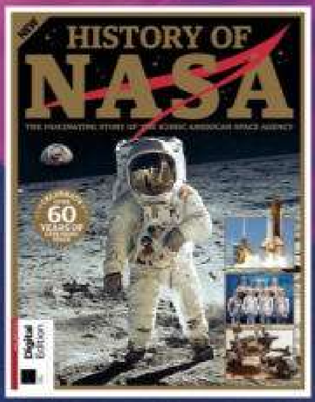
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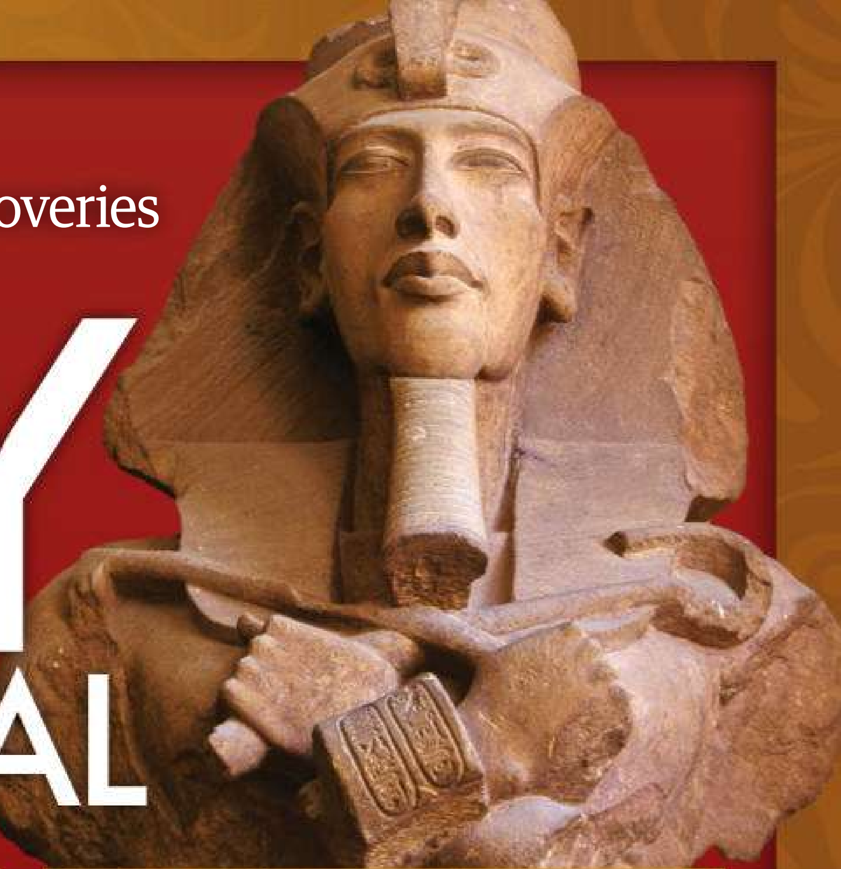

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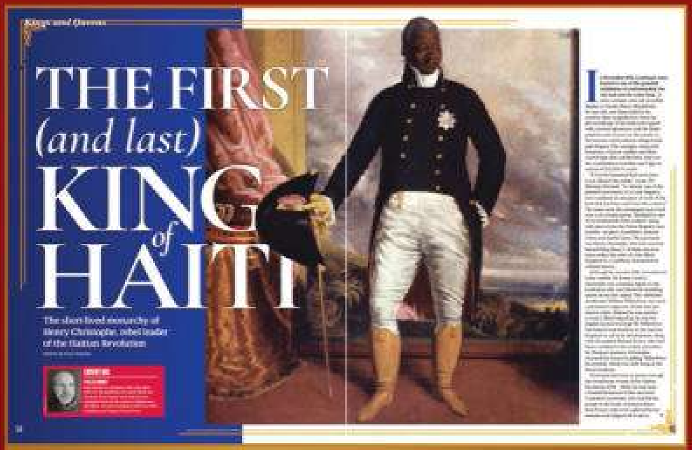
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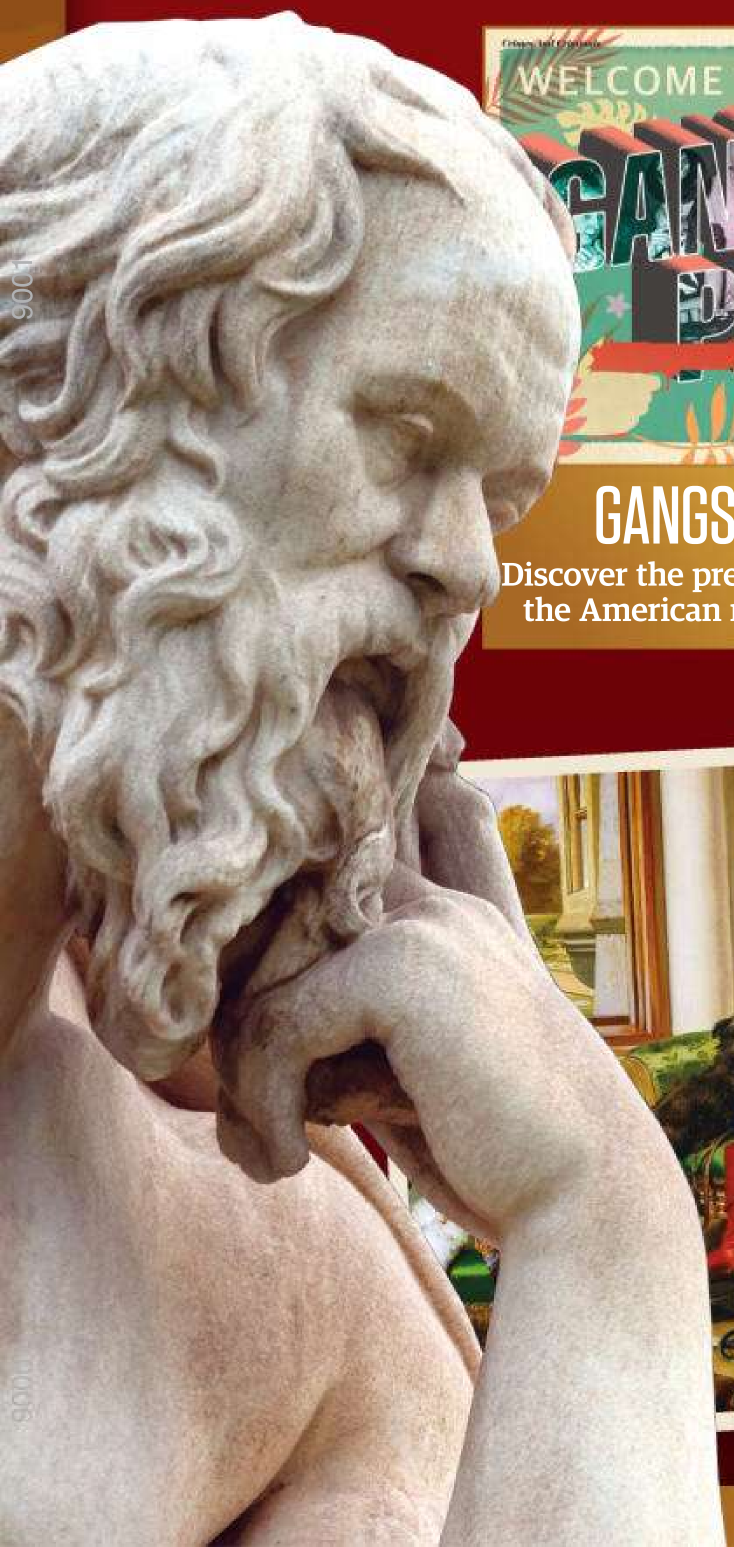

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